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CENTRAL ASIAN PORTRAITS

THE

CELEBRITIES OF THE KHANATES

AND

THE NEIGHBOURING STATES.

BY

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LONDON:
W. H. ALLEN & CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE.
PUBLISHERS TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

1880.

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. H. ALLEN AND CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE, S.W.

PREFACE.

The following biographical sketches of some of the principal characters in Central Asian affairs were written with the object of throwing a little more light than we already possess upon a subject to which we too often permit ourselves to show indifference. They are based upon such information as can be gleaned from all authentic books of travel, histories, official documents, &c. &c. Where the description is more meagre than might be desired, the reader will, perhaps, remember that one of the chief reasons for the scarcity of infor-

mation concerning the careers of native rulers and chieftains is the policy which has been persisted in, for years, by the Indian Government of discouraging, and throwing impediments in the way of, exploration by Englishmen. Of late, too, there has been less energy shown than formerly in giving commissions to native explorers.

It is unnecessary to say anything more by way of introduction to what follows. The portraits speak, it is hoped, for themselves. I have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to regard them from an impartial point of view, and to consider their merits without reference to the part they have played in the development of the rivalry between England and Russia. In some cases I may appear to have awarded too much praise, in others too little. I have sought to try them by a high standard, but I have not, in a weak desire to exaggerate the figure of any of my subjects, strained my

test beyond what seemed legitimate bounds. I leave these portraits, with diffidence, in the hands of the reader, hoping that they may be found to possess some interest and to convey a little instruction, yet not wholly free from the doubt that my clients might, could they be permitted to speak to us, represent themselves in a somewhat different light to that in which they appear to me. But I may say that I have striven to bring them individually before the English reader in as clear a manner as the state of our knowledge will admit.

ERRATUM.

p. 112, line 20, *for* Yakoob Khan, *read* Yakoob Beg.

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CENTRAL ASIAN PORTRAITS.

DOST MAHOMED.

When on the ruins of the conquests of Nadir Shah there arose, in the region lying between the Persian border on the one side, and the territory of Delhi on the other, an autonomous state, generally called Afghanistan, the family of the Sudosyes attained supreme power therein partly through the peculiar reputation it had acquired in the eyes of the Afghans, and partly through the pre-eminent ability of its chief Ahmed Shah. Ahmed, who, as a general, emulated Nadir Shah, and, as an administrator, probably surpassed him, was the founder of what has been termed the Durani monarchy. His power descended unimpaired to his son Timour; but in the following generation not only did the vigour of the ruler become re-

laxed, but the union, which had been hastily patched up in a country which it was only possible in those days for a great soldier to keep welded in one, also began to grow less firm and substantial. The civil wars between the sons of Timour were an invitation to all the ambitious and intriguing brains in the country to combine for the purpose of making the most of the prevailing confusion for the furtherance of personal designs. The invitation was generally accepted, and by one family it was turned to excellent account. It is of the greatest member of that family that it is our purpose, in this opening sketch of those individuals who have influenced the progress of events in Central Asia, to speak here in some detail.

Descended from a line of ancestry which scarcely yielded in importance among the Abdali Afghans to that possessed by the Durani Shahs, of the Sudosye family, Dost Mahomed, Barucksye, son of Poyndah Khan, the leading nobleman at the Court of Timour, was one who, in any country and under almost any conditions, would have won his way to fame. The special circumstances of the hour were

beyond doubt most favourable to the attainment of the ambition he had formed at an early period in his career; but even had the Sudosye dynasty remained supreme, and the Barucksyes content with their subordinate position, Dost Mahomed would have been certain to have shown more than ordinary excellence and ability. The post of Vizier had come to be considered hereditary in his family, and although his youth was against him, there can be no doubt that he would in course of time have risen to that office.

When Shah Zemaun imprisoned and slew Poyndah, the Sarfraz* Khan of the days of Timour, the approach of the close of the authority of the Sudosyes was signalled. Not only did that act of treachery, committed upon the person of a man to whom that ruler owed most of his authority, alienate much of the popular sympathy, but it also roused the leaders of the great Barucksye clan to more vigorous action. The sons of Poyndah vowed that they would

* Sarfraz Khan means "the Noble Lord."

avenge their father's death, and on Futteh Ali, as the eldest, devolved the principal part in the task that had been self imposed.

Dost Mahomed was the twentieth of the sons of Poyndah. His mother was of Persian descent and a Shiah. She was consequently regarded with but little favour by the other wives of that chief; but notwithstanding her origin, she was the most favoured by her husband, whom she accompanied during several campaigns. She was also the soldiers' friend. Dost Mahomed shared in the privations which fell to the lot of the Barucksyes after the death of Poyndah, but, as he was a mere child, very little is known of his life at this period. At one time we are told that Futteh Ali set apart a certain sum of money to provide for his proper education. The Dost was then about eight years of age. In 1800, when Futteh Ali was successfully supporting the cause of Mahmoud Shah, he made his first appearance in public life at the early age of twelve years. At first it was in the capacity of water-bearer, and later on as pipe-bearer, to his brother Futteh. These offices constituted him a sort of body page to

his able brother, and they served to raise a bond of sympathy between them, rarely to be met with between brothers in Afghan history. From this early age the Dost attached himself in a peculiar sense to the fortunes of his eldest brother, and Futteh Ali imposed implicit trust in the sagacity of the promising youth of whose fidelity he felt so well assured. Mohun Lal says that "he never went to sleep until Futteh was gone to his bed. He stood before him all the day with his hands closed, a token of respect among the Afghans. It was not an unusual occurrence that when Futteh Khan was in his sleeping-room, Dost Mahomed stood watching his safety."

In the petty strifes which ensued between the three Sudosye brothers Dost Mahomed played a part only less considerable than that taken by Futteh. On several occasions it was due to the gallantry and skill of this youth, then only a boy of fourteen years of age, that the power of the Barucksyes was not overthrown and the race extirpated. As he advanced in years, the part he played in affairs became larger. It was held to be as necessary

to know what the Dost would do under certain circumstances as to ascertain what Futteh himself intended. His reputation was enhanced by two decided victories, towards which his skill greatly contributed, over Shuja-ul-Mulk and his generals.*

That Dost Mahomed was far from possessing any scruples as to the methods to be employed for the attainment of supreme power may be seen from the facts that he murdered several leading men after a fashion not less remarkable for its treachery than its ferocity. His murder of his elder brother's secretary was a striking instance of the character of the man and of Afghan customs, which still remain unchanged. After this, Dost Mahomed rose to higher posts in the service of the State, but he was still content to be his brother's cup-bearer. A war was at this period in progress with a rebellious governor of Cashmere, then an Afghan province, and while its fortunes were doubtful, it afforded the occasion for the following remark-

* Mohun Lal gives the credit for these exclusively to the Dost. To Futteh Ali probably belongs the chief praise.

able speech from Dost Mahomed, who could not have been more than twenty-one years of age:—

"It appears to me that the victory gained last year, the annihilation of the seditious chiefs, the confinement of Shahzadah Abbas, the repossession of Cabul, and the elevation of our King Shah Mahmoud to the throne of his forefathers, by the use of the sword, and by the wisdom of the members of our family, have been a sufficient source of gratification to those who are attached to our fortunes and to His Majesty Shah Mahmoud. Not only this, but the citizens, fearless of the attacks of the lawless followers of the late rebel Seyyid Ashraf of Kohistan, sleep comfortably; reform and improvement have been successfully introduced into the agitated affairs of government. May our King Shah Mahmoud and my noble brother the present Vizier, as well as the rest of the chiefs, including myself, enjoy the fruit of our hard-earned authority! But I regret to say that the luxurious habits of the King, &c., bid fair to cause that the present condition of the country be not a lasting one. One cause for every one of the above-mentioned individuals falling into

luxurious indolence appears to be that they forget the seditious conduct of Ata Mahomed Khan, governor of the rich valley of Cashmere, *without the possession of which region no king of Afghanistan has been, or ever will be, able to maintain a large army and the royal dignity.*

"Notwithstanding the peace and pleasure which every one seems to enjoy, and that to imitate them there is an open field for me also, yet the rules of sound and far-sighted diplomacy, *which are always* wandering in my heart and brain, have not allowed me to rest a moment, and I shall never be easy until some mature steps are taken to punish the hostile obstinacy of Ata Mahomed Khan, the Governor of Cashmere, who turned the Government agent, as well as that of my noble brother the Vizier, with disgrace, out of the valley, and refused to pay the stipulated sum of tribute. It is not possible to defray the general expenses of the movements of an army under my noble brother the Vizier to check the restless spirits of the discontented chiefs unless the country of Cashmere be ceded to us."

This speech led to the despatch of a large

expedition against Cashmere, which was completely successful; but the vigilance of Runjeet Singh, and internal dissensions, prevented the reward of this vigorous action being permanent. The Afghan leaders withdrew from Cashmere, but only to find that their line of retreat had been intercepted by a Sikh army stationed at Attock. After a stubborn resistance, and the performance of almost incredible acts of valour by the Dost, the Afghans were routed and obliged to flee to Peshawur. Nor was safety to be found in that place. The shadow of civil disturbance was again settling down over Cabul, and the Vizier and his brother were obliged to return to the capital for the purpose of maintaining their position. The expedition into Cashmere which had promised to secure that revenue-producing province, the necessity of which was insisted upon in the speech just quoted, really resulted in the triumph of the Sikhs, who derived all the benefit to be obtained from the reverse suffered by the Afghans. Had there been no dynastic question in course of settlement, Futteh Ali would probably have returned with

fresh troops, but the war which now broke out between Shuja and Mahmoud effectually destroyed all chance of such a course being taken.

Shortly after this occurrence the state of affairs at Herat called the attention of Mahmoud and his Vizier to that province, where the Persians were carrying on intrigues with the object of re-establishing their authority there. Futteh Ali and Dost Mahomed marched westwards at the head of a large army. In the campaign that ensued a severe battle was fought at Kussan, where Futteh Ali was wounded. The result was doubtful, as both armies resumed their former positions. Futteh Ali then intrigued to supplant Feroz, the ruler of Herat and a brother of Mahmoud, and he did not scruple to employ the meanest artifices for the attainment of his purpose. Unfortunately, both the Barucksye chiefs sullied their triumph by gross excesses. The Afghans can forgive the blackest treachery, and they evince no extraordinary indignation towards deeds of blood; but they are less disposed to condone acts which shock the national sense of honour.

Dost Mahomed was the greatest offender of all. By as much as he excelled all his comrades in valour and military skill, by not less did he surpass them in greed for spoil and the other recompenses of savage battle. Having broken into Herat, having surprised and slain the guards at the gates, and having seized the person of Feroz, he began to plunder all connected with the palace. Not content with this, he offered an inexpiable outrage to the sister of Kamran, who had married her cousin Prince Malik Kasim. The band which fastened her trousers was fringed with precious stones, and on her refusing to hand it over, he cut the band and took it away. What wonder that Kamran on hearing of this, as he did speedily, for his sister sent the profaned robe to him, should swear that he would avenge the insult on the person of Futteh Ali and the Dost? The keen eye of the Vizier detected the political blunder involved in the rash act of his young brother, and not only did he publicly repudiate all participation in it, but he took steps for the arrest and punishment of the culprit. These, it is not surprising to find, the latter evaded,

making his escape to his other brother, Mahomed Azim, the Governor of Cashmere.

But the revenge of Kamran did not slumber because its chief object had fled. The power of the Barúcksyes was dependent upon the supremacy of Futteh Ali, and the greatest blow that could be dealt the individual was to smite the family by sweeping the Vizier from power. Kamran came to Herat bent on the errand of avenging his sister's shame, at the same time that he asserted his own position in the realm. In that camp which was still the scene of the rivalry of opposite parties in the State, it was not difficult for the King's son to gather round him a strong party pledged to work out his own ends. To all appearance Kamran was the dear friend of Futteh Ali, but behind his back he was plotting, not less successfully than secretly, his destruction. Futteh Ali was surprised and thrown into prison, where he was at once deprived of sight. Kamran then set out for Cabul with his illustrious prisoner. The blinding of Futteh Ali was the signal for the outbreak of a fresh civil war. Dost Mahomed returned with money and with troops from

Cashmere. Shah Shuja set himself up for a third time as ruler. Mahmoud lost his head, and made frantic but vain appeals to Futteh to induce his brothers to come to terms. The appeals were unavailing. The noble man was to be moved as little by promises as he had shown himself to be by threats. He said "since he had lost his sight he had lost all his influence over men." He was forthwith murdered by order of Mahmoud and Kamran, with every circumstance of cruelty that a malignant and disappointed hatred could suggest.

In the meanwhile Mahmoud's party was losing ground throughout the country. Dost Mahomed had made himself master of Peshawur, and was in full march for Cabul, which he expected to take partly by force and partly by fraud. He succeeded in his object as well as he expected. The Bala Hissar was captured after a siege of a few days by mining one of the gates of the upper citadel. This success was followed up by the disbandment of the army of Mahmoud, who fled with his son Kamran to Herat. The Barucksye brothers, who all came forward to claim a share in the spoil won solely

by the ability of Dost Mahomed, then parcelled out the country between them, and Ghizni was allotted as the share of the Dost. Although he possessed one of the keys of the country, he was not content with either his share or his relative position towards the rest. The intrigues of Dost Mahomed for the attainment of supreme power became the chief cause of disturbance in the state. He availed himself of every opportunity that offered for the extension of his influence, and he did not scruple to make the most of the disputes which arose between his brothers, as well as of the expiring efforts of the Sudosye dynasty for the recovery of its rights.

Mohun Lal, in his "Life of Dost Mahomed," appears to take an inexplicable pleasure in repeating all the details—which rest only upon rumour—of various acts of atrocity which must be held to sully the fame of a man whom we would gladly accept as a true hero.* These

* In considering Asiatic character allowance must be made for national customs. This is in no case more necessary than in that of the Afghan tribes. An Afghan might be a hero, and yet commit deeds which would make an Englishman a criminal.

need not be specified; but taken into general consideration, they serve to show that this man had no scruples of conscience. No human weakness or sympathy stood between him and the realisation of a design. One instance may, however, be given of the way in which Dost Mahomed strove to advance his personal interests at this time. His elder brother, Mahomed Azim, had marched into Pisheen for the purpose of levying tribute from the Mirs of Scinde, and he had specified four lacs of rupees as the sum he expected to receive from them. Dost Mahomed, who accompanied him with a considerable band of followers, notified to the Minister of Scinde that, if he were sent one lac, he would desert his brother and thus compel him to abandon his enterprise. His offer was accepted, Dost Mahomed retired to Candahar with his ill-gotten treasure, and Mahomed Azim was compelled to leave the coffers of the Mirs of Scinde untouched.

After this Dost Mahomed withdrew to Peshawur, and for a short time he officiated as Governor of Kohat. He was soon on terms again with Mahomed Azim, but there was dis-

trust between the brothers, as could scarcely have been otherwise, and Dost Mahomed received permission to go wheresoever he liked. He availed himself of this permission, and withdrew to Ghizni, of which he made himself master by a stratagem. If the means which he employed were of a questionable character, he always appears, the end once attained, to have endeavoured to turn it to the best account for the interests of the people. Master of Ghizni, he "restored confidence and peace among the inhabitants." All Mahomed Azim's efforts to recover that town proved abortive. But Dost Mahomed, far from being content with the possession of Ghizni, was intent upon playing for a larger stake. During these years the Sikh danger had been a growing one, and Mahomed Azim, baffled in an attempt to defend the Peshawur valley against Runjeet Singh, returned to Cabul to die of disappointment and disease brought on by exposure.

The death of Mahomed Azim was the signal for fresh disturbances in the state; but it is unnecessary to follow these in any detail. They resulted, however, in the establishment of the

Dost's authority in Cabul itself. He then acquired Balabagh and Jellalabad. This had scarcely been done when his attention was called to the south, where the Sudosye Shuja-ul-Mulk was threatening Candahar with a large force. He hastened by forced marches to the assistance of his brothers, who were hard pressed in that city, and, having drawn up his force in front of the enemy, attacked without giving time to his friends, some of whom were meditating treachery, to desert. The result justified both his foresight and his energy. His arms were completely victorious, and Shuja-ul-Mulk was again driven to take refuge within English territory. In this battle Akbar Khan greatly distinguished himself, and indeed, in a sense, the victory may be said to have been due to his valour.

On his return to Cabul Dost was proclaimed Ameer, thus being the first Barucksye to assume a supreme title. The Sudosyes had always claimed and used the royal style of Shah, but when they were expelled the kingdom the confusion which followed, in consequence of the disagreement between the Barucksyes, pre-

vented anyone aspiring to the chief place of all. The death of Mahomed Azim and the Dost's victory at Candahar smoothed the way for a Barucksye to assume the title of Ameer, of special significance in the eyes of all the followers of the Faithful. His great want was money, and he spared no effort to obtain as large a sum as he could from his subjects. He even resorted to plundering foreign merchants in order to procure what he required. A gloomy picture is drawn of the state of Cabul during these early days of the administration of Dost Mahomed; and whether the man or the conditions of the hour were to blame, it is clear that at this time he was not a benefactor to his people. He marked the commencement of his reign by the issue of a new coinage, bearing upon it the stamp Dost Mahomed, Ghazi—conqueror over the infidel before they were vanquished.

All these measures were sanctioned and defended on the ground that they were taken for the prosecution of a war against the Sikh infidels; and Dost Mahomed moved his army forward to Dacca, whence he addressed appeals to the fanaticism of the border tribes. He

then marched through the Khyber, and took up a position in the Peshawur valley. His brother, Sultan Mahomed, however, deserted him, and the Sikh army, reinforced by Runjeet Singh in person, took up a strong position in his front. But although the fanaticism of the Afghans had been raised to a high pitch, there was little fighting; and the opposing camps became the scene of plots and counter-plots, which were but an insignificant achievement as the result of the first campaign of one who had assumed the proud title of Ghazi. To some extent, however, he vindicated his reputation by the successful campaign of 1835, when his sons defeated Hurree Singh in a battle at Jumrood, in which the Sikh general was killed. The credit for this victory was given at the time to Akbar Khan, but there appears to be little doubt that it should have been awarded to the Dost's eldest son, Afzul, who, thirty years later, was for a short space *de facto* Ameer of Cabul.

Notwithstanding that the Ameer committed many deeds which were probably not less impolitic than they were certainly cruel, there is no question, as clearly shown by the result,

that he must have been a wise and prudent ruler. He encouraged trade as it had not been encouraged in Afghanistan for many years before; and if he was harsh in his dealings with the chiefs of the clans, and the members of his own family, it was doubtless because he knew that if he were not, the same law would be meted out to him as had been to his predecessors.

Sir Alexander Burnes has left the following description of the reputation which Dost Mahomed had acquired, and it would be difficult to imagine that it could be said with truth of any of the other chiefs who have made themselves supreme in Afghanistan:—

"The reputation of Dost Mahomed is made known to a traveller long before he enters his country, and no one better merits the high character which he has obtained. . . . The justice of this chief affords a constant theme of praise to all classes; the peasant rejoices at the absence of tyranny, the citizen at the safety of his house and the strict municipal regulations regarding weights and measures; the merchant at the equity of the decisions and the protection of his property; and the soldiers at the

regular manner in which their arrears are discharged. A man in power can have no higher praise. Dost Mahomed Khan has not attained his fortieth year; his mother was a Persian, and he has been trained up with people of that nation, which has sharpened his understanding and given him advantages over all his brothers. He is doubtless the most powerful chief in Afghanistan, and may yet raise himself by his abilities to a much higher rank in his native country."

The writer who has already been several times referred to, Mohun Lal, who appears to me to have allowed his judgment as a historian to be warped by his desire to say what he thought would be most agreeable to his English patrons, gives the following description of this ruler about the same period; and it may be interesting to place it side by side with the one just quoted. In some respects the English writer is the more impartial; yet even unwillingly as it is given, Mohun Lal's tribute is a flattering one:—

"In the person, in the manners, and in the public proceedings of the Ameer there is manifest the existence of everything imaginable

most suitable to support his own view. He is calm, prudent, and wise in cabinet, and an able commander in the field. In treachery, cruelty, murder, and falsehood he is equally notorious. He is not at all a popular ruler,* but he is the first man in Afghanistan who knows how to keep his authority undisturbed, and to deal effectually with the vagabond Afghans. He is certainly very much liked in regard to one thing, namely, this: any man seeking for justice may stop him on the road by holding his hand and garment, and may abuse him for not relieving his grievances. Whatever odium may attach to the Ameer of Cabul, it is an unquestionable fact that he is the only person fit to rule Cabul."

Much more might be quoted to the same effect, but enough has been said, perhaps, to show that, if the test of the result attained be applied, Dost Mahomed was even at this time a very successful ruler.

Alone among the Afghan chiefs he had collected round him the semblance of an army.

* This assertion is certainly a rash one.

His cavalry was computed at twelve thousand strong, his infantry at four thousand men, and he had an artillery train of from fifty to sixty field pieces, besides a large number of camel swivels. This considerable force was more or less trained, and divided into regiments. They were paid regularly, and by that means were more firmly attached to the person of their prince. Nor did he commit the blunder of attempting to create a military machine framed upon the model of the British army. He left the national customs intact, and trusted alone to the warlike spirit of the Afghan people, being fully content to secure the *maximum* of faithful service with the *minimum* of interference with individual rights and liberties. By these means he created an armed force, well adapted for warfare in a mountainous region, and one which, if it could not cope with a regular army, was at least as formidable after it had ostensibly been dispersed as when it was drawn up in regular array.

It was at this time, when Dost Mahomed's reputation had been heightened by the success at Jumrood, and the repulse of the attempt of Shah Shuja against Candahar, that the English Go-

vernment first came into contact with him as ruler of Cabul. The demonstrations made by Persia against Herat, the thinly concealed activity of the Russian agent at Teheran, and the operations that were in progress on the steppe from Orenburg—all these had served to stir the Indian authorities up to a great pitch of activity. It was held to be certain that Russia was on the eve of making a hostile move in the direction of the Indus, and it must be remembered that, although much has taken place in the interval, and a vast extent of territory been annexed by Russia, the prime object before her agents then was exactly what it can only be at the present, viz. the possession of Herat. It would be rash, therefore, for anyone to declare, because forty years have not sufficed to obtain for Russia the prize she coveted, that the action of our authorities in 1838 was unjustifiable. As a matter of fact, the result may be said to have afforded the fullest vindication of the policy adopted; for it was our energy in 1838 and the following years which closed the Persian door to Russia, and compelled her to take a long and circuitous route

in order to reach the outworks of Hindostan. When those first Afghan wars of Keane, Pollock, and Nott are remembered, this much in their favour should not be left out of sight.

The mission of Sir Alexander Burnes to Cabul in 1837 was intended to counteract these evil influences by placing the relations with that state upon a surer basis; but in the meanwhile that embassy had been really deprived of its value by the resolution that had been come to, to champion the fallen Sudosye dynasty in the person of Shuja-ul-Mulk, the pensioner of Loodiana. Dost Mahomed expected that the first proof that would be afforded of British sympathy towards himself would be the restoration of the Peshawur valley, and when he found that such a restitution formed no part of our plans he was greatly disappointed and chagrined. He had also no direct interest in the Herat question at this time, and in letters written to the Shah he expressed his willingness to become a Persian vassal. In fact, if words in the East were ever anything more than an idle compliment, he actually called himself a dependant of the Shah. The mis-

sion of the Russian agent, Captain Vickovitch, further complicated matters, and at last Sir A. Burnes withdrew, leaving the impression on the Ameer's mind that the English would afford him no assistance in the realisation of his pet designs. His brothers at Candahar had entered into the closest connection with the Persian Government, and had accepted without hesitation the part which had been sketched out for them. Dost Mahomed, who was at first far from being unwilling to declare a hearty alliance with England, was compelled to come round to the same view; and had not the Russo-Persian plot been thwarted by the protracted defence of Herat, it is probable that his alliance with the Shah, and his acceptance of the overtures brought by Vickovitch would have borne fruit in practical facts.

The withdrawal of Burnes was the immediate precursor of a declaration of war against Cabul. The reply to the intrigues of Persia and Russia was the concentration of the army of the Indus at Ferozepore. Negotiations then ensued between ourselves, Runjeet Singh, and Shuja-ul-Mulk for the restoration of the last to

the throne of Cabul; and the Tripartite Treaty was drawn up and signed. On the 1st of October 1838 the celebrated Simla manifesto was issued, and the state of the relations between British India and Cabul passed from one of peace to one of open hostility. In that manifesto, which was both a proclamation to the Afghans, and a defence of the Government policy manufactured for home use, a large number of subjects was dealt with; but among others was, it is instructive to note, "the integrity of Herat."

It is unnecessary to do more than very briefly recapitulate the leading features of a war which has already been so often described. The army of the Indus marched through the Bolan, and entered Candahar without resistance. Two months later Ghizni was taken by storm. So great was the effect of this reverse upon Dost Mahomed that he lost all faith in his cause. His army disbanded, and he himself, leaving his artillery behind, fled to Bamian. Hard pressed in his flight by Outram, the Ameer did not stop for any length of time until he reached Khulm, where he was well re-

ceived by the Usbeg chieftains. But even then it was not proposed to make any permanent halt there. Some of the Ameer's followers recommended his taking refuge in Persia; others, in Bokhara. While his envoys were engaged in exploring the road to Maimene, and in paving the way for a journey to Bokhara, the Dost went from Khulm to Kundus, where he entered into close relations with Mourad Beg, the Usbeg chief of that state. The reply sent by Nasrullah, the Ameer of Bokhara, was couched in friendly terms, but Dost Mahomed hesitated to accept the invitation of one who was a national enemy. But the road *viâ* Maimene was reported to be impassable, and the danger of being captured by Kamran, the bitter foe of the Barucksyes, afforded an additional reason for accepting the offer of Nasrullah. When provisions began to grow scarce in Khulm, Dost Mahomed, accompanied by his sons and a considerable retinue, set out for the Oxus and Bokhara.

Of Dost Mahomed's residence at Bokhara little need here be said. For a few days he was fêted as became a royal guest, but then

either the inconvenience of entertaining so large a number of strangers; or some ulterior plan of forming the Afghans into a military colony, produced a change in the conduct of Nasrullah. Several of the Afghans, and notably Akbar, endeavoured to leave the country. Collisions occurred between these and the Bokharan troops; and altogether the Afghan refugees were a source of considerable annoyance to the ruler of Bokhara. Dost Mahomed was at last confined to his house, and treated in all respects as a prisoner. It became his most ardent desire to effect his escape from the hands of a tyrannical ruler who might at any moment be seized with a whim to order his execution. At a favourable moment Dost Mahomed escaped from Bokhara to Shahr-i-Sebz, whence he made his way to Khulm. He was well received by the Usbeg chiefs of Afghan Turkestan, and he at once set about making preparations for a fresh effort to recover his throne.*

* An interesting description of his life at Bokhara will be found in Mohun Lal's book. It must be taken *cum grano salis*.

Dost Mahomed found little difficulty in raising a considerable force of Usbegs out of the petty states beyond the Hindoo Koosh. His chief supporter in this campaign was Afzul, but his troops were for the most part Usbegs, and it was arranged that if the adventure should prove successful, an Usbeg chief was to become his Vizier. His army advanced boldly enough to the attack of our outposts in the Sighan valley, but at Bajgah—the scene of several encounters before and since—his cavalry under Afzul was worsted. In face of his superior numbers, our little force concentrated at Bamian, and Colonel Dennie with a small body of fresh troops from Cabul arrived to inspire new courage into the half-wavering ranks of our sepoys. It was pre-eminently one of those occasions when boldness is prudence; and Dennie was equal to the occasion. The large army of Dost Mahomed was attacked by the small English force, and driven in confusion from the field. Had Colonel Dennie waited to receive the attack of the vastly superior numbers of his assailants, he would in all probability have been defeated; but by taking the

initiative, he foiled the designs of his antagonist. The principal result of this decided success was that the Usbegs deserted Dost Mahomed. For a short time it seemed as if he had found sure friends and a safe place of retreat, but the first breath of disaster showed those beliefs to be delusions. Dost Mahomed became an outcast and a fugitive.

Travelling through the valleys, and along the declivities of the Hindoo Koosh, the Ameer made his way to the Kohistan, where the blunders of English policy had converted friends into enemies. Our success at Tootundurrah—where Edward Conolly, one of a noble band of brothers, was killed—and the failure at Joolgah, were only the preliminaries to the final collision at Purwandurrah, where Dost Mahomed made a gallant charge at the head of his horsemen, routing the 2nd Cavalry, which refused to follow its officers. The hour which, as Kaye says, should have been one of triumph was one of humiliation, and this gallant action threw over the fall of Dost Mahomed a gleam of romance and chivalry. Seeing that his success was sure to prove transitory, and that his own

followers were doubtful in their fidelity, he resolved to throw himself on the generosity of the English. Riding throughout the night of the day which had beheld the first victory he had obtained in the war, he reached Cabul on the 3rd of November, and surrendered to Sir William Macnaghten in person. A few days afterwards he was sent to Calcutta, while his family remained at Loodiana.

Lord Auckland settled on him a pension at the rate of three lacs a year, and he was allowed perfect liberty in his movements. He was, no doubt, greatly struck with what he saw there, and said that had he known the power of the English he would not have thought of acting in opposition to their views. After the conclusion of the second campaign in Afghanistan in 1842 it was decided to permit his return to his country, and he thus began a second term of authority in Afghanistan. On this occasion he had the great advantage over the former in that the withdrawal of our army from the country signified a withdrawal of policy as well, leaving him free to deal with the internal condition of his state without any apprehension of external

pressure. But although he was loud in his expression of friendship towards England, that did not prevent him entering into some kind of understanding with the Maharajah Shere Singh for joint action against her. This may have had something to do with his conduct during the second Punjab war, when an Afghan contingent fought on the side of the Sikhs; but with that exception his relations with the British Government after 1842 were those of friendship.

The restoration of Dost Mahomed was followed by years of gradual recovery on the part of Afghanistan, and as the country recovered, so did the Ameer's authority extend throughout the realm. In some of his reforms he was much obstructed by his son Akbar, who had tasted the sweets of power during his father's absence, and was loth to sink into a secondary position. His death, however, in 1849, removed this element of danger and simplified Dost Mahomed's task.

After the close of the Punjab war, and the annexation of that province by England, Dost Mahomed turned his attention more exclusively to the extension of his empire over Herat, and

to the north of the Hindoo Koosh. In 1850 he wrested Balkh from his former supporters, the Usbegs, and afterwards subdued Khulm, Kundus, and Badakshan. In 1855 the connection between England and Cabul had been drawn more nearly together by the signature of "a treaty of amity," and in 1857 the bond was made still closer by the conclusion of a second treaty for the specific purpose of driving the Persians out of Herat, which they had seized from one of those weak rulers who, after the death of Yar Mahomed, managed to obtain temporary authority in that city. On his death-bed, in 1863, when he is supposed to have been about eighty years of age, he had the great satisfaction of entering Herat in triumph, and of incorporating that town with the rest of his kingdom. The dissensions which had been produced by the desire to obtain possession of that much-coveted place had been one of the chief causes for disturbance in the state. His final triumph there was the consummation of a life which had been devoted to the task of restoring Afghanistan to something of its extent as under the first Durani. He gave Cabul,

during his long reign, a fresh lease of prosperity; he survived the Sikh power, which at one time threatened to absorb his state; he lived to become good friends with England, his former foe; and he left to his son and heir a kingdom which, if not as extensive as that of Ahmed Shah, was at least a splendid territory.

It is difficult to arrive at a decided opinion concerning the exact character of the man whose long career, extending over a period of more than sixty years, has here been sketched out. Mohun Lal's biography, in which he styles his subject a hero and paints him a villain, does not certainly simplify the task. The writer whose opinion should have been the most valuable is consequently of little value to us, and we must form an opinion for ourselves from the ascertained facts which make up the history of the period. The more closely Dost Mahomed's career is studied from the earliest time, when he served as page to his brother Futteh, the more evident does it appear that he was actuated throughout by one idea. The youngest of the Barucksyes, he was in a sense the most ambitious, for whereas his brothers aspired only

to the Viziership under a Sudosye king, or at the most to independent governorships in a Barucksye confederacy, he always aimed at first ousting the Sudosyes from the realm, and then making his own authority supreme and unquestioned therein. In this, after many failures, disappointments, and disasters, he succeeded. His triumph came in the evening of life, but apparently it was enjoyed none the less. The Sudosye dynasty became a tradition, the Barucksye brothers disappeared one by one—leaving him alone to represent a family and an idea—the intrigues of the Persian were beaten back, the apprehensions of England were allayed—all was changed save the person who had at one time been the plaything of fortune, and at another the victim of circumstance. He had conquered his enemies, or been conquered by them. He had always met them boldly, and in the end he triumphed over them all by surviving them. He achieved a still greater triumph by surviving the political conditions which at one time threatened his ruin. Never has an Asiatic chief succeeded, and probably never will one in the future succeed, in making his

policy appear to be the policy of England. Yet he succeeded at the least in doing this. It was his policy which triumphed in 1842. Its wisdom was ratified by success under the walls of Herat in 1863. It was the continuation of the same policy which was adopted from that year until 1869, and it remained in force, very slightly modified, down to the year 1875. Not only did Dost Mahomed make himself supreme in Afghanistan, and establish a fresh dynasty, not only did he secure all the objects at which he originally aimed, but he also obtained the triumph of his own policy, which was to keep his country independent by inducing his neighbours to regard it with indifference. Whatever attraction "the mushroom Barucksyes" may have in the eyes of the observers is due exclusively to the genius of Dost Mahomed. It was he who gave life to a cause that would but for him have probably remained in the background. This is really only his secondary title to consideration and praise; his first and principal being his steadfast and never-swerving adherence to a programme which he had sketched out during the earlier days of his public career.

Alone among Asiatics of prominent mark he had sufficient confidence in himself and his cause to adhere to his views, when to all seeming that adherence would cost him his throne, his power, his life. This is his true claim to be considered a great man. Alone among Asiatics, of his age at all events, he had convictions, and he endeavoured to act up to them. He had consequently a great advantage over all his rivals, for in everything he did he had a great motive, whereas they for the most part were influenced by littlenesses beneath contempt. Pages might be filled in discussing the character of this great man, but his chief merit consisted in the simple fact that he saw farther ahead than his contemporaries. His ability and tact, nay, his very plausibility, served to render the acceptance of his views the less distasteful; but however their acceptance may have been brought about, they were accepted, and it was the policy of Dost Mahomed which was held to be, for a quarter of a century, undiluted wisdom in this country. Others obtained the credit, but he was the fountain-head whence it sprang. As a general, Dost Maho-

med was probably inferior to both Nadir and Ahmed, but the difficulties which hampered his progress were much more serious than those that beset the career of the Turcoman or the Durani. As a ruler he probably surpassed them. With many of the qualities of Baber, Dost Mahomed might at another period have left a deeper track in history; but no Englishman can afford to ignore a life which was at once varied and rich with profitable experiences.

THE LATE AKHOND OF SWAT.

In the mountainous region which lies to the north of the Peshawur valley, and beyond the country of the Momunds, are the districts of Swat and Bajour. The hillmen who inhabit them are known far and wide for their fanaticism and their courage. Seldom, indeed, has it happened that the explorer has been able to obtain admission within their borders, and they have continued to live on after their own primitive fashion, deaf to the entreaties of the Afghan rulers, and indifferent to the threats of either Sikhs or English. It was among these tribes, ruled by chiefs whose claims to exercise authority were admitted in a more or less loose manner, that the latest instance occurred of a

priest, whose reputation had been created and spread by the supposed sanctity of his life, acquiring into his hands an exclusive spiritual power which over-rode whatever secular authority the native chiefs possessed. It is true that the career of the late Akhond of Swat is only that of the most successful of those religious fanatics of the Indian frontier who have turned their fanaticism to practical account by making it the means for attaining worldly influence and power. But none the less, considering the part he played in frontier politics during almost thirty years, is his history well worth the study of the politician and the historical student. At the least it will show how easy is the passage, among the superstitious and fanatical hillmen of the lands beyond the Punjab, from a hermit's cell to a chieftain's castle.

Abdul Ghafur, such was the late Akhond's name, is supposed to have been born in the first years of the present century, or in the last of the eighteenth, but of the exact date there is no record. Before his first retirement from the world in 1823, he had, however, studied under the instruction of several learned

priests, but had never been able to master the intricacies of the Koran sufficiently to hope for any exceptional distinction as a "mollah." His father was an inhabitant of a small village in the Swat territory, and until he had reached the age of sixteen Abdul's sole experience had been that of tending his father's flocks on the hills and in the fertile valleys of that district. The boy, naturally ambitious and extremely acquisitive by disposition, was unable to brook the irksomeness and solitude of his existence. He fled to Peshawur, then in the hands of the Sikhs, and passed some years there and at other places in the study of the doctrines of his religion. But, in 1823, he came to the decision that he must adopt some other method of acquiring that power for which he so eagerly longed. He retired accordingly to the lonely island of Beyka, which, created by one action of the river Indus, has been long since destroyed by another, and there during twelve years he sojourned in perfect seclusion, broken only by the periodical visits of devotees, who, attracted at first by curiosity, came again and again, through a belief in his semi-divine attributes, and spread

throughout the Punjab, then groaning under the rule of the Sikh heretics, the fame of the hermit of Beyka.

The reputation of his sanctity reached the ears of Dost Mahomed, at that time established as ruler in Cabul and the adjoining districts; and when that prince came to the resolution, in 1835, to declare a war against the Sikhs, he not unnaturally decided to enlist the sympathy and aid of the recluse in his cause. Dangerous as was the enterprise upon which he was about to embark, considering the power and ability of Runjeet Singh, Dost Mahomed had reasonable hopes of being able to drive the Sikhs out of the Peshawur plain and beyond the Indus, and his first step was to invite Abdul Ghafur to quit his retreat and participate in the campaign that was about to commence for the cause of that religion of which he had proved himself to be so enthusiastic a follower. With the summons of the Afghan chief Abdul willingly complied, for he saw that the moment had arrived in his career when he was either to obtain the object for which he had so long striven or to sink back into the insignificance from which, by

resolution of no ordinary kind, he had temporarily emancipated himself. Of the result of this combination of secular force and religious fervour, suffice it here to say that neither one nor the other availed to turn the scale against the "big battalions" of the Sikhs. In the war of 1836 Dost Mahomed's power was greatly crippled, and for offensive measures east of the Khyber that power altogether disappeared. But Abdul Ghafur's determination was proof against even such a serious rebuff as this, and he resolved to separate his fortunes in a certain sense from those of Cabul, and to seek a fresh field for his influence in the mountainous tracts stretching north of the Khyber towards Chitral and Cashmere. To his natal hills, therefore, returned the once ignorant boy, now developed into a personage of no mean authority through his own abilities. His chosen followers, few in number, were formidable by reason of their energy, their fanaticism, and their implicit credence in the supernatural powers of their leader. With this small nucleus of skilled and faithful administrators, he, who originally came in some sense as a fugitive, gradually acquired supreme

control over the place of sanctuary to which the pursuing Sikhs had driven him. The exact form of rule observed among the Swatees has never been made very clear, but, whatever it was, that of Abdul Ghafur, now becoming known as the Akhond, or priest-magistrate, soon supplanted it both in Swat and Bajour. Long before the year 1850 the Akhond, into whose neighbourhood we were brought in that year by the annexation of the Punjab, had become a power for good or for evil along the Indian frontier. He had accomplished his heart's desire of wide-spread notoriety at the same time that he had spread his secular authority over no inconsiderable extent of country. He had dispensed with the alliance of Dost Mahomed, and he had set the power of the Sikhs at defiance. But in 1850 the presence of the English power within striking distance of his own almost inaccessible stronghold compelled the adoption of a more circumspect attitude, and although in one of the first important border difficulties in which we were engaged he gave shelter to refugees hostile to us from our territory, he never on any occasion declared a

"jehad" against us. The years 1850–53 were marked by great activity on the part of the Swatees, Otman Khels, and other tribes within our borders, and it was generally supposed that the Akhond was the moving spirit in the league that was formed against us. He certainly gave shelter and made grants of land to refugees from British territory.

During the ten years after 1853 he preserved a stricter neutrality, confining himself to the extension of his spiritual influence; and even at the worst stage of the Mutiny he is said to have given the advice not to enter into hostilities with us to those who sought his opinion. In this he did but copy the example set to all of Pathan race by Dost Mahomed. Six years after the Mutiny, the expedition sent against the Sittana colonists in Umbeyla roused him into fresh activity, and a league of "almost all the tribes from the Indus to Cabul" was formed against us. There is great difference of opinion as to the exact part played by the Akhond in this war, the fiercest of all our frontier campaigns; but there is no doubt that he did actually join the tribes we were engaged

with. Sir Neville Chamberlain mentions in his official despatches the arrival of the Akhond, and the measures which he took in concert with the Moulvie Abdullah, the leader of the Sittana fanatics. So great was the effect of this decided act on the part of the Akhond that it was found necessary to raise the strength of the English force to nine thousand men. After the two severe defeats at Laloo and Umbeyla, and the destruction of the village of Mulka, the Akhond fled back to Swat. Major James, the political officer accompanying the expedition, believed that he had only joined the Sittana rebels because he feared that if he did not, his influence would suffer to the advantage of that of the Hindoo Moulvie. It was his name, however, which had made the rising so formidable; but the complete success attained by the English expedition read him a lesson which he never forgot.

It is impossible to say what part the Akhond, who had gained during the last fifteen years of his life a power both within and without our frontier not to be despised by us, played in the various border disturbances. He may have

been their prime instigator or their persistent disapprover. He undoubtedly was the oracle to which the hillmen had recourse with as much superstitious veneration as was manifested of old towards that of Delphi. Of what nature his responses were we know not, and it is very doubtful if now we ever shall know. He is represented as having discouraged Shere Ali in his proposals for joint action against this country, and to have also refused his approval to the Jowakis in their hostility towards ourselves in 1877. If these assertions could be proved to be authentic, it would be natural to assume that a perception of the power of our rule had qualified his old religious and political antipathies. But, after all, these assertions may have been the mere voice of idle rumour, and the real convictions of the ambitious Akhond may have been of a far different complexion. During the last few years the question was further complicated, and certainly in our favour, by the jealousy felt by Shere Ali for the independent ruler of Swat. Bajour and Swat are fertile valleys, and their strategical importance is very great. Shere Ali claimed

them as part of the Afghan monarchy, and, although he was willing on various occasions to propitiate the Akhond, he never relished the existence of an independent Power within his own dominions. These two rulers to a slight extent neutralised each other. They never concluded an alliance either against us or anybody else. In the main they played at cross purposes and pulled in different directions, and we profited by their disunion.

The spiritual authority of the Akhond often brought his pretensions into collision with the administrative regulations of our Government; for his influence was perhaps greatest among our subjects the Yusufsai. The decrees of excommunication which he fulminated against his rivals, and they were far from being few, were generally respected in the Punjab, and his opinion of the unlawfulness of bestowing funeral rites—*janeza*—on those who served an infidel government such as ours, was the cause of the retirement from our native service of many who would otherwise have remained with us. The authority of the Akhond was, therefore, in many ways, inconvenient to our officials. Of

the domestic life of Abdul Ghafur little is known. In the early years of his career he preached and practised the virtues of celibacy, but with his installation as ruler in Swat he cast them aside, together with other prejudices of his period of asceticism. He left a large family, many of whom have arrived at mature age, and, doubtless, desired to perpetuate their father's rule. Only a very short time ago, when an old man bordering on eighty, he married a young girl of eighteen, and it is, possibly, only our lack of information which would make us mention this as his last marriage ceremony. For a time, some of his personal authority descended to his son, but the most recent intelligence from Swat tends to show that the native chiefs are reacquiring exclusive power in that valley.

The death of the Akhond occurred in the beginning of the year 1878, at a time when the crisis on the Punjab frontier was becoming acute. His disappearance from the troubled scene in which he had so long played a foremost part turned undoubtedly to the advantage of this country; but regarding the life of

Abdul Ghafur from the standpoint of his fellow-countrymen and co-religionists, it is impossible for us to withhold from him a very high degree of admiration. Whether at heart a foe or a friend to England—which, perhaps, will ever be a problem—he always, it must be admitted, had the courage of his convictions, both in adversity and in prosperity; and his personal intrepidity was not less remarkable than that stoicism and power of endurance which earned for him so wide a reputation among the Mahomedans of the Punjab and the neighbouring regions. Just as his career was but an imitation of that of the great Afghan saint, Darwezah, so may he himself serve as the ideal for some future Pope in the lands that fringe the British dominions in India. The present state of Asian politics, and the actual condition of the Mahomedan religion, alike favour the pretensions of those fanatics, who, partly by craft and partly out of downright earnestness in their sentiments, obtain an ascendancy among their co-religionists. Of such Abdul Ghafur was the most recent, and in some respects he was also the most remarkable.

SHERE ALI.

THE genius of Dost Mahomed was to a great extent inherited by the majority of his sons. Akbar Khan, our opponent in 1842; Hyder Gholam, for many years the heir-apparent; Afzul, a successful soldier, and ultimately Ameer; Azim, not less successful in warfare, and, for a brief space, also *de facto* Ameer; Ameen, Akhram, both slain in battle, and Shereef,—were all in their way remarkable, both as types of the Afghan character and for their personal qualities. But none of these brothers inherited so much of their father's genius as Shere Ali, the late ruler of Afghanistan. Both as a soldier and as an administrator he approached most nearly to the greatest of the

Barucksyes. Like his father, he was above the influence of adverse fortune. He never appeared more noble than when crushed by defeat. But the fortitude which he evinced in the face of disaster deserted him in his days of prosperity. The temper of his mind was as keen and polished as could be imagined, but he lacked that serenity which had made Dost Mahomed as formidable as an octogenarian as he had been in the days of his fiery youth. Essentially Shere Ali's character was deficient in ballast. He was great in his conception, but weak in his execution of a design. He could nerve himself to bear stoically the greatest reverse of fortune; but he could not achieve the same victory when fortune had showered favours upon him and he was nursed in the lap of prosperity. His biography, rightly regarded, is of scarcely less interest than that of his father; and its tenour is the more important in proportion as the Afghan question has increased in significance during the last twenty years.

Shere Ali was born in, or about, the year 1820. His mother, a lady of noble birth, was the same who had borne to Dost Mahomed

Akbar and Hyder Gholam. Of the better known of that ruler's sons Shere Ali was consequently the fifth. Of his early life little has been preserved save that as a young man he accompanied his father during his enforced residence in India from 1840 to 1842, and it is supposed that it was his companionship during that period which endeared him so much to his sire.

It is not necessary, however, to discover in the selection of Shere Ali as his successor any peculiar favouritism on the part of Dost Mahomed. By all the rules of Afghan custom he became on the death of his elder brothers, Akbar and Hyder Gholam, the proper heir. His claims were superior to the children of the former, and his other and older brothers, Afzul and Azim, were the offspring of an inferior wife. We know from contemporary reports that scenes of disturbance in the various cities where his sons officiated as governors marked the closing years of Dost Mahomed, and that the final triumph of that prince under the walls of Herat but shortly preceded his death, when anarchy fell upon the realm. The nomination of Shere Ali as heir apparent upon

the death of Hyder Gholam had warned the other sons that the disappearance of the Dost would be the fit occasion for the revelation of their individual pretensions; and when the conclusive triumph of his reign was followed by the termination of the life of the aged Ameer, they at once made their preparations for disputing the inheritance with that younger son whom many of them despised quite as much as they hated.

Dost Mahomed died at Herat on the 9th of June 1863; and a few days afterwards Shere Ali was proclaimed Ameer of Afghanistan and its dependencies. Those of his brethren then at Herat were compelled to acknowledge him as their lawful ruler, and to again swear oaths of fidelity to him upon the Koran; and when he had taken this precaution, leaving his third son, Yakoob Khan, behind as Governor of Herat, he hastened by forced marches to the eastern parts of his dominions.* Nor was his

* Much of the description of Shere Ali's wars with his brothers is taken from my "England and Russia in Central Asia."

promptitude unnecessary. His full brother Ameen Khan, at that time governor of Candahar, was the first to appear in arms against him, and this example of fraternal jealousy found in a short time imitators in both Afzul and Azim. The year passed off, however, without any hostilities on a large scale, and in December our Government officially recognised Shere Ali. During the winter of 1863–64 preparations were being made in silence for the war that was to commence with the first appearance of spring. On the one side Shere Ali strove to put down opposition by a bold front, and to add to the strength of his position by obtaining the sympathy and practical aid of our Government. In this latter object he was not very successful. On the other side, Ameen Khan at Candahar, Afzul at Balkh, and Azim in Khurum, were all preparing for the contest with not less energy, and thus Shere Ali found himself threatened on three sides by powerful foes. The campaign commenced in April 1864 with a simultaneous advance against Azim in the south-east and Afzul in the north. The former of these was speedily overthrown by Shere Ali's general,

Mahomed Rafik, and compelled to flee into British territory. In the northern campaign, fought out in the passes of the Hindoo Koosh round Bamian, the result was less conclusive. A drawn battle took place at Bajgah, in which Mahomed Ali Khan, the eldest son and heir of Shere Ali, greatly distinguished himself. Both sides then showed themselves anxious for an accommodation, Shere Ali because he dreaded the price of victory, Afzul because discouraged by the defeat of Azim. A truce was arranged without much difficulty, and the two armies, lately drawn up in hostile array, entered Balkh in company. For a brief space things wore a peaceful aspect, but Abderrahman, Afzul's son, was detected in some act of treachery. This underhand plotting afforded Shere Ali an excuse for adopting harsher measures in dealing with his rivals. Afzul was arrested and imprisoned, and Abderrahman escaped across the Oxus into Bokhara. Whatever blame may have attached to Shere Ali for this summary proceeding, there is no doubt that his triumph was almost complete at the close of his first campaign. With Azim and Abderrahman fugi-

tives, and Afzul a captive in his power, Shere Ali seemed to have crushed all resistance to his authority as soon as it had shown its head. Disaffection appeared to be triumphant in the south alone, where Ameen Khan held independent court at Candahar. Futteh Mahomed, a son of Akbar, was raised to the governorship of Balkh, while the Ameer in person returned to Cabul for the purpose of dealing with his last rival. But by this time the year was drawing to a close, and military operations had to be suspended until the melting of the snow. In the meanwhile Ameen Khan had been joined by his brother Shereef, and Jellaluddin, his nephew, the son of Akbar. In the north, too, Abderrahman, at the head of an army raised in Bokhara, was again preparing to take the field. In the commencement of the year 1865 Shere Ali's position again seemed serious, but still he might reasonably expect to triumph over all his difficulties by promptitude and audacity. The army of Ameen Khan appeared in the field several weeks before that of Abderrahman could move, and ere Shere Ali left Cabul it had attempted to seize the fortress of Khelat-i-

Ghiljie by a *coup de main.* The resolution of the garrison foiled the attempt, and the Candahar forces retired as Shere Ali's army advanced towards them. At Kujhbaz, near the town just mentioned, the rival armies halted in face of each other, and prepared for the struggle which was to decide this part of the campaign. On the Candahar side the three confederates already mentioned and Surwar Khan, the eldest son of Azim, held command. On the Cabul side were Shere Ali himself, his eldest son Mahomed Ali Khan, and his best general, Mahomed Rafik. The battle commenced early in the morning of the 6th of June, and during the earlier portion of the day Shere Ali's army seemed to be getting the worst of it. At the crisis of the engagement he rode up to his eldest son, and taunted him with want of courage. The story goes that, deeply stung at this accusation, Mahomed Ali led a desperate charge into the thickest of the battle, and finding himself face to face with Ameen Khan, fought with him, until they slew each other. To his eldest son's bravery Shere Ali owed a victory when on the point of being defeated, and the death

of Ameen extracted all real danger from the side of Candahar. Within a week that city surrendered and became the base from which most of Shere Ali's subsequent operations were carried on. The chief importance of this success consisted in its restoring communications with Yakoob Khan, who, during all these disturbances, had maintained his father's authority in Herat. For the moment it seemed as if all Shere Ali's troubles were about to cease, for his arms had up to this point been uniformly successful, and in all directions. So assured did his triumph appear that the Ameer withdrew to Candahar to indulge in the luxury of grief for the loss of his eldest and favourite son.

To Ibrahim Khan, his second son, but on the death of Mahomed Ali the presumptive heir, he entrusted the northern campaign, which was to be carried on in the vicinity of Cabul itself. About six weeks after the battle of Kujhbaz, Abderrahman crossed the Oxus at the head of an Afghan army, and was at once joined by the forces which had been entrusted with the defence of Balkh. Shere Ali's governor, Futteh Mahomed, fled through Bamian

to Cabul. During the months of August, September, and October, inaction prevailed on all sides, save that the army of Abderrahman was daily drawing closer to Cabul. At this moment Shere Ali's cause received a serious blow by the defection of his general, Mahomed Rafik, whom Ibrahim Khan had wantonly insulted, and of his own brother, Shereef, whom the Ameer had pardoned for his previous defection and then despatched with reinforcements to Cabul. Azim had also joined Abderrahman, and the hostile camp again presented a united and formidable appearance to the embarrassed Ameer.

The year 1865 closed ominously, but no blow had yet been struck. Courage and rapidity of movement can always do much against greater numbers, but the unfortunate Shere Ali still passed his time in Candahar in idle lamentation. In February, Azim, who had assumed the chief command, summoned Ibrahim Khan to surrender, and, after some paltry skirmishing, the army of Shere Ali melted away, and the capital was given up. On the 2nd of March, Azim was installed as temporary ruler, while Ibra-

him wended his way with the evil tidings to his father at Candahar. With the occupation of Cabul, the second stage of this bitter contest may be said to have closed. Shere Ali, victorious at Kujhbaz, lost all the fruits of that battle by his subsequent lethargy; and then, by employing the incapable Ibrahim, had done much towards ruining his cause.

The news of the fall of his capital roused him from his torpor like the sound of battle to a war-horse. The black cloud which had partially obscured his reason for nine months, was dispelled by this unexpected disaster. Great efforts were made in Candahar and the southern portion of the state to raise and to equip another army; and he received from Yakoob Khan at Herat large reinforcements of brave troops. With such energy did Shere Ali devote himself to his task, that in the middle of April he felt in readiness to advance to the relief of Ghizni, which still held out for him. His army was computed to number some fifteen thousand men, of whom a large proportion was cavalry, and he had also twenty-five guns more or less effective. Ghizni was entered

in triumph on May-day, and once more the opponents were reduced to what appeared to be an equality. After a few days' rest in this fortress, Shere Ali marched north against the confederate encampment at Shaikhabad. On the 10th a general action commenced, wherein the impetuosity of Shere Ali proved unavailing against the tactical skill of Azim. Ghizni at once opened its gates to the conqueror, and Shere Ali fled to Nanni with a few hundred followers. His defeat had been complete. All his artillery, stores, equipage, and most of his troops had fallen into the hands of the victor; and he was left alone and as a fugitive to oppose the resistance of half-a-dozen conquering princes. Yet he did not despair. His adversity was God's will, but human energy and determination would still suffice to retrieve what had been lost through misfortune. With the fall of Ghizni Afzul recovered his liberty, and he, as as the elder brother of Azim, was installed as ruler. Then there ensued a lull in the contest. Apathy characterised the movements of the victors after Shaikhabad just as it had characterised those of Shere Ali after Kujhbaz, only in

this case with less excuse. Afzul Khan reigned in Cabul, Ghizni, and the northern khanates; Shere Ali in Candahar, Ferrah, and Herat. There were two *de facto* rulers, and the State was divided into two almost equal parts. But at this moment the confederates began to be disunited, and Afzul, who had become a confirmed debauchee, was speedily supplanted in Balkh by Faiz Mahomed, another of the Barucksye brothers.

Shere Ali remained at Candahar endeavouring to arm the levies which his own energy had gathered around him. All his overtures to procure assistance from us in arms or in money were rejected, and he had slowly to construct his own artillery, and to collect muskets for the recovery of his realm. In the meanwhile his enemies were playing into his hands. Azim had developed into a blood-thirsty tyrant, Afzul into a drunkard, Abderrahman into a dissatisfied intriguer. During the reign of terror at Cabul, Azim, in a fit of passion, caused Mahomed Rafik to be arrested and murdered. This act of treachery alienated much of the popular sympathy from the side of the con-

federates, and public opinion began at last to veer round to the side of Shere Ali. The year 1866 passed away in preparations for the contest, but early in January 1867 Faiz Mahomed, now the ally of Shere Ali, forced the Bamian pass, and advanced on Cabul. A diversion in his rear compelled him to return, and the imminent danger from this quarter disappeared. In the meanwhile more important events were in progress in the south. The armies of Shere Ali and Azim had encountered under the walls of Khelat-i-Ghiljie, and for a second time the fortune of war decided against the former. Khelat-i-Ghiljie and Candahar fell into the hands of Azim, and Shere Ali was expelled from all his possessions except those in the far west.

The recognition of Afzul by our Government as Ameer of Cabul and Candahar, must be considered to have been the most important result of this victory. Azim was appointed governor of Candahar, and preparations were made for the invasion of Herat and the final overthrow of Shere Ali's power. At this period a brief gleam of sunshine

appeared to the distressed Ameer in the staunchness of Faiz Mahomed, who won a battle at Bajgah in the neighbourhood of Bamian. An interview took place in the mountains between Shere Ali and Faiz Mahomed, and a league was formed between them for the recovery of Cabul. About this time Shere Ali, in disgust with our neutrality, made overtures to Russia and to Persia, which, however, came to nothing.

Late in the autumn, when all hope of foreign aid had to be abandoned, the army of Shere Ali and Faiz Mahomed set out for Cabul. It had not proceeded far before Abderrahman caught the division of the Balkh chieftain in the defiles near Kila Alladad, and routed it. In the battle Faiz Mahomed was slain. This event occurred in September, and early in the following month Afzul died. His able brother Azim succeeded him, and was recognised even by his nephew and rival Abderrahman. The Indian Government deputed a *Vakil* to reside at his court, and he could fairly claim the title of Sovereign of Cabul by right of possession. His triumph was complete on all sides, for even

Balkh, after the death of Faiz Mahomed, had been occupied by Abderrahman. Surwar Khan, Azim's son, was appointed governor of Candahar, and Azim himself remained in Cabul. For three years fortune had been uniformly adverse to Shere Ali, in council chamber and on the field of battle. She was now, at last, when all things were at their blackest, about to veer round to his side with her usual inconstancy.

Up to this stage in the war Shere Ali had fought his own battles, and in contrast with his brother Azim's or his nephew's military capacity his skill had appeared to small advantage. In the campaigns we have described he had been alone well served by his son Mahomed Ali and his general Mahomed Rafik, and with the death of the former and the defection of the latter all the burthen of maintaining the strife fell on his own shoulders. He had been notoriously ill served by Ibrahim Khan. But now, when it seemed all hope must be abandoned, he found a supporter and a champion in Yakoob Khan, his third son, then a youth of nineteen. Up to this moment the part the latter had taken in affairs had been only of secondary

importance. He had performed the useful but somewhat inglorious office of sergeant-major to the army, drilling and despatching to the front the raw levies of Ferrah and Herat. Now he was to assume a more prominent *rôle*. Abderrahman has been styled the Hotspur of the confederacy, but if that comparison be just, it is far more appropriate to call Yakoob Khan the Prince Harry of the rightful cause. In the spring of 1868 Yakoob Khan set out from Herat to attack Candahar, and, without much loss of time, defeated Surwar Khan at the battle of the Helmund and drove him out of the city. He then advanced on the fortress of Ghizni, which opened its gates.

While these events were in progress Abderrahman was bringing up reinforcements from Balkh, which Yakoob Khan, however, intercepted by forced marches, and defeated with considerable loss. Seizing the opportunity caused by the withdrawal of Yakoob Khan, Azim relieved the garrison of the citadel of Ghizni, which still held out for him. But with the defeat of Abderrahman victory was assured to Sherè Ali; and Azim, unable to retard the victorious pro-

gress of the combined armies of Shere Ali and Yakoob Khan, evacuated the town of Cabul. In Balkh, however, the uncle and nephew plotted during the ensuing winter how to regain their lost position. In the depth of winter along the snowy heights of the Hindoo Koosh the struggle was yet to rage for some months, but the end was no longer far off. A conclusive battle took place at Tinah Khan, near Ghizni, when both Abderrahman and Azim suffered defeat at the hands of Yakoob Khan. Shere Ali was at last triumphant, and on the 26th of January 1869 he held public Durbar in his regained capital. In his deepest distress he had found a heaven-sent champion in his third son, and to the abilities of that youth was it solely owing that the tide of war had been rolled backward from Herat. Azim meanwhile was flying through Seistan, but died of the privations he had undergone on his road to Teheran. Abderrahman fled to Balkh, whence he was expelled by Ibrahim in the spring of 1869. He found refuge and hospitality among the Russians at Samarcand, where he still resides in the receipt of a large pension from the Government of Tashkent.

With the close of the civil war in Cabul it became necessary for this country to define afresh its relations with a Sovereign who, acknowledged in 1863 as Ameer, had been partially repudiated in 1867, and who in 1869 was again supreme. Lord Lawrence, shortly before the victory of Tinah Khan, had entered into direct negotiations with him and had sent him the present of twenty thousand pounds with a promise of one hundred thousand pounds more. This gift arrived most opportunely after the exhaustion of the struggle, and undoubtedly did to some extent allay the irritability our previous vacillation had raised within him. Shere Ali then commenced the reorganization of his dominions, and appointed Ibrahim Khan, who had not greatly distinguished himself in the war, to the governorship of Herat. Yakoob Khan, to whose abilities Shere Ali had been so greatly indebted, was placed over the eastern portion of Afghanistan, including Cabul. Having thus set his house in order, Shere Ali made the preparations necessary for a brief absence from his country. From Cabul he proceeded through the Khyber to Jumrood and Peshawur, and

thence to Rawul Pindee; and visited the Earl of Mayo, encamped at Umballa to receive him. The Durbar held there was a most gorgeous ceremonial, and Shere Ali, impressed by many things during his journey through the Punjab, was certainly surprised and flattered by the reception he found awaiting him at his destination. To an ordinary Oriental the pomp and glitter of that show would have atoned for much that was unreal and for doubtful expressions of friendship and alliance; but Shere Ali was not an ordinary Oriental. The wonders of Western science and the imposing majesty of our strength were indeed strange things to the ruler of an ignorant people and an impoverished state; but Shere Ali came not to be astonished or even to be fêted, so much as to be assisted, subsidised, and guaranteed. Now, to do any one of these things in the way in which the Afghan ruler desired we were not prepared. He had been flattered sufficiently, so we thought, in being treated as an independent prince, on a footing superior even to Scindiah or the Nizam. He was also granted a further present of money and a fresh supply of arms. But we did not in any

single particular comply with the precise demands which he made upon us. During his brief sojourn the continual whirl of entertainment and display prevented anything more than an occasional manifestation of disappointment at the barrenness of the result, but to his mountain home he carried back the conviction, to be brooded over in secret, that nothing valuable could be extracted from this country without the performance of some service on his part, or the surrender of some dearly-prized privilege.

In the years following 1869 the impression seems more and more to have forced itself upon him that in relying on us he would be trusting to a broken reed. Yet from our point of view we had acted well towards him. We had been consistent with all our declarations. We had recognised with each turn of fortune that son of Dost Mahomed who chanced to be uppermost, and not until fortune had conclusively shown that of the brothers Shere Ali was to be the successful one did we make up our minds that he was the most eligible candidate. What wonder, then, that Shere Ali should be far

from enthusiastic in support of our views, and rather sceptical of the value to him of that friendship with which we were so condescending as to honour him? We had trimmed throughout all those years of anarchical misrule, and even at the Umballa Durbar we were still aiming at a double goal. Until we concluded a treaty with him, bestowing some unequivocal mark of our support, and from which it would not be possible for us to go back, what guarantee had he that we would not show ourselves indifferent to his fate if misfortune were again to fall upon him? The Umballa Durbar was the formal confirmation of our recognition of him as *de facto* ruler of Afghanistan. That was all; Shere Ali was in no wise strengthened against either Abderrahman or any other rival. What he wanted would have made him safe against domestic as well as foreign foes—a further supply of arms, a regular allowance, and, above all, some proof of British support to flaunt in the face of inimical intriguers in the bazaars of Persia and the Khanates. By a non-compliance with these demands we failed to secure his hearty goodwill. The meagre aid—for

in his eyes it was meagre—he received from us in money encouraged him to commence improvements in his civil and military systems, as to some of which it is doubtful if they ever went further than the incipient steps. It was not sufficient to enable him to complete them.

The feeling generated in 1869 became stronger as time rolled on, and in many ways Shere Ali showed either caprice or ill-humour. The Seistan frontier question afforded him an opportunity for venting his grievances because our arbitrator* was too impartial in adjudicating upon the rival claims of Persian and Afghan. The intervention of our Government in 1874 in favour of his son Yakoob Khan, whom, by a breach of faith, too common in Afghan history to call for much notice, he had imprisoned in the Bala Hissar, was another grievance to be stored up in the treasure-house of his memory, until all his wrongs should amount to a bill of indictment that would justify him in repudiating the British alliance, and in casting in his lot with the

* The present Major-General Sir Frederic Goldsmid, C.B., K.C.S.I.

Great Northern Power. His overtures to us in 1873 for what would amount to a defensive and offensive alliance against Russia, which were rejected; our proposals to him in January 1877, which were tantamount to his placing his kingdom at our disposal as an advanced post, whence the career of Russia in Central Asia might be the better arrested to the mutual advantage of the two states of India and Afghanistan, which had no practical result—both these events tended to further inflame the mind of a ruler who was nothing if he was not passionate and suspicious. The occupation of Quettah by British troops proved to the mind of Shere Ali that he must either retrace his steps, and adopt a more friendly policy towards the British Government, or proceed to greater lengths than ever, and leave no doubt as to his hostility. For more than twelve months he remained doubtful which course to pursue; but the prospect of a war between England and Russia over the Eastern Question, and the arrival of a Russian embassy at his capital, decided him. The reception of the mission of General Stoletoff led to the despatch of the embassy of Sir Neville Chamberlain,

and the refusal to admit the English representative into the country was the inevitable precursor of war. During the progress of the campaign of 1878 Shere Ali remained at Cabul, until the defeat of his troops at the Peiwar warned him that his line of defence had been pierced. In a letter dated the 13th of December 1878, and addressed to the officers of the British Government, he announced his departure from Cabul with the intention of proceeding to St. Petersburg, there to place his version of the question before a Congress. In a singularly boastful firman, dated the 22nd of December 1878, and addressed to Omar Khan, the Governor of Herat, Shere Ali announced several victories on the part of his troops, "whose zeal brought on a day like that of the Day of Judgment." Although Shere Ali had evidently supposed that he would be admitted without any difficulty within Russian territory, unexpected objections appear to have been raised, and during several weeks he resided at Takhtapul. He was suddenly taken ill there, and removed to Mazar-i-Shereef, where he died on the 21st of February 1879.

Of Shere Ali's internal administration something must be said. Keen in observation and shrewd in judging the practical value of things, he recognised that one of his surest safeguards against popular disturbance would be to adopt the same preventive means as he had seen were adopted by us. He accordingly issued an edict forbidding any arms to be carried between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4 a.m.; and he appointed watchmen in Cabul and some of the other large cities for the preservation of life and property at all hours. He also sought to curb the power of his Sirdars by enabling the people to enter into direct communication with himself, and with this view he revived the right of personal petition. He also created a postal service throughout his state, and this is reported to have been the most successful of all his improvements. In another way he attempted a great reform, doomed, however, to speedy failure. This was the substitution of cash payments for payments in land or kind. The cause of this failure may with reason be attributed to the arbitrary manner in which the money value was assessed. He also alleviated the punishments

previously in force, and sought to strengthen his rule by exhibiting general moderation, and by conciliating more especially the mass of the people whom most of the previous rulers had neglected. In two respects he attempted changes in the native customs that were of less importance but were eminently characteristic of the man. He requested that all should wear English-made clothes, and he set the example himself; but he absolutely commanded all the shoemakers of Cabul to get rid of their old goods and in the future to make nothing else than boots of a European pattern. In dealing with his army he was not less influenced by his experience of English customs than in those civil matters some of which have been mentioned. He divided his troops into regiments, of which there were fifty-seven of infantry and sixteen of cavalry. Of the former, fifty were said to be properly armed, and each was computed to muster about six hundred and fifty bayonets. A cavalry regiment consisted of four hundred men. The Afghan regular army created by Shere Ali numbered, therefore, thirty-seven thousand foot and six thousand

four hundred horse. In addition to these, there were about eight thousand irregular cavalry, three thousand five hundred jezailjies, or irregular infantry, and a local militia of unascertained strength. The artillery comprised about one hundred pieces in service and one hundred and fifty in store. He established gun factories and powder magazines in the chief cities. Such was the army which Shere Ali created in the years subsequent to the Umballa Durbar. The recent campaigns show that Shere Ali was not justified in reposing confidence in the machine which he had so carefully created. His military reforms and attempts to organise a standing army were mistakes when regarded from the point of view of Afghan customs and the national character. Though giving him a momentary sense of strength, they sapped the foundations on which the power of an Afghan ruler must always rest.

Of the personal character of this ruler it is difficult to give for an English reader a sketch which, while it shall be accurate, is not open to the charge of being exaggerated. But if it be just to take human nature as the same all the world

over, and to apply to an Afghan chieftain the same test that is employed in considering the career of a European king, it may be truthfully said that as a sovereign Shere Ali had experienced depths of misfortune equal to those sounded by Frederick the Great. With not less determination and fortitude than was exhibited by that great monarch, he made defeat and disaster the stepping-stones to victory and prosperity. Even after the rout at Shaikhabad, when everything seemed utterly lost, he assembled his remaining followers around him, and bade such as despaired of his cause go over to his enemies. For himself he was Ameer of Afghanistan, and so long as life remained to him he would fight for the recovery of his rightful inheritance. The military skill of Yakoob Khan and the gallantry of the levies of Herat were the visible causes of the turn in the fortunes of the war; but behind them, moulding them into shape to produce great results, were the indomitable courage and energy of this never-despairing king. When victory finally came he appears to have used it with moderation. The long path which he had trodden

through adversity and misfortune had taught him the necessity for controlling that ungovernable temper which had led him into acts of tyranny, bringing down upon him the hostility of his subjects. One of the most trustworthy authorities on the subject, the late Mr. John Wyllie, describes his appearance at the time when it was uncertain whether peace had finally settled down over Afghanistan or whether only an armed truce had produced a lull, in the following words :—

"In his air there is all the dignity which royal birth, coupled with a long experience of misfortune, seldom fails to confer; and the habitual melancholy of his passion-ravaged countenance is eloquent with the tale of that domestic grief which four years ago shook his reason with an almost irreparable throe. But the dominant feature is the eye, and its expression sternness—the practised sternness of one never known to spare any adversary that might be wisely struck."

Other authorities have taken exception to this description on the ground that the chief characteristic of the face was cruelty rather

than sternness, and that in the eyes there was an expression of cunning mixed with timidity. Mr. Wyllie's version rests on a sounder and more probable basis in itself, and tallies more closely with all that is known of Shere Ali. His career proves him to have been neither a monster of iniquity nor a paragon of virtue. In the first year of his reign he indulged in the impulses of his violent temper, and in the next five years he paid the penalty for the indulgence. During the last eight he appeared keen and calculating rather than high-minded and impulsive. He never showed doubt on the point that the best way to force the hand of the British Government was to simulate an affection for Russia, and he acted according to his belief. In endeavouring to steer clear of any definite arrangement with either this country or with Russia, he compromised his good name among us, and it is possible that he went further than he was really disposed to do in his negotiations with Russian agents. During his later years he undoubtedly strove to formulate some plan of common action with the hill tribes on the Punjab frontier, and it would almost seem as

if, finding all other means abortive, he had instigated them to acts of hostility against this country. The vague promises of aid which he certainly gave some of the clans in 1877 were magnified by the voice of rumour into a distinct engagement, and may have been instrumental in bringing about the troubles with the Jowaki Afreedees. But whatever Shere Ali's inconsistencies may have been, he could never wholly forget his father's advice that the true interests, both of his own country and his particular dynasty, were to maintain friendly relations with the English.

The reasons which gradually led him from a policy of doubtful friendship into one of open hostility towards this country have been specified. They acted unfavourably on his character. His suspicious nature became more developed, and had he lived long enough he might have become in one respect an Asiatic Louis XI. But if we regard his career impartially, and forget that he became the foe of this country after having sworn to be its friend, it must be admitted that he possessed great abilities. He was certainly no unworthy son and successor of the illustrious

Dost Mahomed, and under more favourable circumstances might have done much towards perpetuating the Barucksye dynasty as the heir of the Durani monarchy. If he was not in the highest sense of the word a great man, he was certainly a remarkable one, and as soldier, general, administrator, and prince, must be classed among the foremost of his contemporaries in the East.

GENERAL KAUFMANN.

To describe General Kaufmann's career in any detail would be to write the history of Russia's progress in Central Asia during the last twelve years, the most eventful period in the whole course of her activity in that continent. Few details have come to light concerning the early life of this general. His name is to be found some fifteen years ago in close attendance upon the Czar, of whom he was a favourite aide-de-camp; and he undoubtedly owed to his winning manners much of his subsequent advancement in the service. But the gay young officer was neither overburdened with the good things of this world, nor was he of so unambitious a temperament as to desire to pass away his life

in idleness at St. Petersburg or Wilna. He was known to be willing to accept any post offering emolument and holding out a reasonable prospect of obtaining a military reputation. In 1867 the chance offered itself, and the influence of his friends, added to the attachment of the Czar, obtained for him the reversion to the newly created dignity of Governor-General of Turkestan.

The annexation of the northern portion of Khokand in 1865 had led the St. Petersburg authorities to seriously consider their new position in Central Asia, and a commission, known as the Steppe Commission, was appointed to inquire into the subject. Its deliberations led to the formation of a Governor-Generalship of Turkestan, with its capital at Tashkent, where, notwithstanding the increase in the extent of the dependent territory, it still remains. It was as the second of these governor-generals that General Kaufmann went to Tashkent in November 1867. His selection for the high post to which he was advanced occasioned some surprise. It also raised considerable envy in the breasts of those who had served in Asia. It is

true that at that time Turkestan was regarded more in the light of a place of exile than as a land to be coveted. Only the needy or the desperate were desirous of proceeding thither; but there were not wanting a few ambitious men who saw an opening in Central Asia for their talents or their enterprise. To these it was a great disappointment that an unknown staff officer should be, as it were, passed over their heads to an office for which it could not be claimed that he possessed the necessary qualifications. The prize was in their eyes a real one. It represented the just realisation of all their efforts. Kaufmann had never been in Central Asia. To him it was a *terra incognita*. His military experience was also very limited; and to place at his discretion operations of war with unknown peoples and conducted on principles different from those to which he had been accustomed, was in their eyes to commit the most egregious of blunders. Unsuited for the work with which he would be entrusted, Kaufmann was in the eyes of the regular Central Asian officer held to be undeserving of the prize which they believed he would not appre-

ciate. As events turned, out Kaufmann surpassed the most sanguine expectations, and is now admittedly the champion of the Chauvinist party among Central Asian authorities in Russia.

General Kaufmann's personal character was not such apparently as would redeem the shortcomings of his attainments and his experience. His temperament was prone to over-confidence, and his vanity was excessive. With almost unlimited power placed in his hands and beyond the control of the central authorities, Kaufmann felt that he might carve out both an empire for his master and a reputation for himself without placing any other fetter on his inclination than the extent of his resources. He could also indulge his personal vanity by the maintenance of a ceremonious etiquette and external state that would not have been possible under any other circumstances. This desire for display earned him the title of Yarim Padishah, or half-king. It found at the same time expression and relief in the severe etiquette with which he fenced himself around, and still more publicly in the salutes

which he required as the recognition of his presence, and in the escorts which he attached to the persons of his wife and family.

These little weaknesses had the greater importance, because they induced him to devote much of the time that should have been passed in the transaction of public business to the formal or ceremonial side of his office, and much of the administrative labour had, consequently, to be performed by subordinates. A general laxity soon became perceptible in the public service. Darker assertions were freely made, and it is generally believed that there has been much peculation prevalent in his administrative bureaux. However that may have been, there is some confirmation of the charge in the fact that the opinions of two commissions of inquiry that were appointed have never been made public. General Tchernaieff, whose name is connected with some of the most brilliant Russian exploits in Central Asia, but whose opinion is not clear of the suspicion of being influenced by jealousy of General Kaufmann, has been particularly active in the levelling of charges against the Tashkent administration.

Kaufmann has at least the defence that he is not worse than his class. It would be a matter of great difficulty to find a single bureau in Russia free from the taint of patriotism being blind where personal profit is concerned.

It was unavoidable that a man of the lavish disposition of Kaufmann, and filled with a very eager desire to win military laurels, should, when entrusted with the charge of an estate heavily encumbered and greatly impoverished, fail to adapt his ends to the means he possessed. So long as he could indulge the freak of the moment or carry out the design immediately before him, he recked nothing of the cost or the consequence. As an administrator it cannot, therefore, be contended that General Kaufmann has achieved a brilliant success. Under the most favourable supposition, his labours have produced but partial results. Year after year the expenditure has gone on increasing at a rapid rate. The Central Asian provinces are a burden to the imperial exchequer, and the burden, with each fresh acquisition, has become heavier instead of lighter.

The province of Kuldja was the one possession which proved in any way remunerative, and the Chinese have succeeded in reacquiring that fertile region. The military and the civil expenditure exceed the revenue by a greater sum than ever they did before, and the Government is compelled to resort to what can only be termed cooking the accounts to make the balance-sheet assume anything like a respectable appearance. For a very considerable portion of that deficit Kaufmann's extravagance has been directly accountable; but graver blame must be held to attach to the laxity of the supervision he exercised over his subordinates. His indifference to matters of detail led him very often to neglect opportunities that more practical and experienced officers would have been prompt to seize, and this was especially noticeable in matters connected with trade. It is true that the opportunity is now afforded General Kaufmann to repair during his second, the blunders which, in this respect, marked his first, term of power. But it is not likely that he will avail himself of the opportunity. The conqueror of Khiva will no doubt

hold it to be beneath him to investigate such paltry items as the expenditure connected with the administrative departments of Turkestan. It is not as an auditor-general that Kaufmann has consented to return to Tashkent.

It is much more unaccountable to find that Kaufmann did so little for the advancement of trade during his tenure of power, for Russia's programme of conquest has always been a double one; extension of trade having scarcely been second to the absorption of fresh territory. There have been several Societies started at his instigation, but they have one and all ended in failure; and under his auspices Russia's trade in Central Asia has made the very slowest progress. The impulse of late given to the production of cotton has been due to some as yet unexplained revival of energy on the part of the native populations. But when it is remembered that for twelve years Russia has had the complete control of the trade of all the countries north of the Hindoo Koosh, and that she alone has possessed the ability to carry on commercial intercourse therein, it is astonishing to find

how little has been done for its promotion. The Russian finances have suffered through the apathy of the ruling powers, and the State has not benefited by the impetus to trade which was expected to be one of the results of the Russian campaigns in Central Asia. General Kaufmann personally must be held mainly responsible for this lack of progress, for there can be little doubt that, although the wealth of the Khanates was in the first place exaggerated, the original expectations of a great Central Asian trade were not without substantial justification. Had General Kaufmann devoted himself to the task that he should at once have undertaken, he would probably have obtained some very tangible result while he would have conferred a more permanent benefit on his country than he has by the numerous wars which his ambition produced. He did not avail himself of his opportunity; and if the Russian rule in Central Asia were to be extinguished tomorrow, General Kaufmann's administration would not leave any memorial behind to distinguish it from any of the barbarisms that

have risen periodically to imperial power in Central and Western Asia.

When General Kaufmann arrived at Tashkent in November 1867, Russia had only just planted her foot within the doorway of the Khanates. The governor-generalship of Turkestan had been established by an imperial ukase four months before, and when Kaufmann succeeded Romanoffsky Bokhara and Khokand still maintained their independence, and Khiva was indifferent to, if not actually defiant towards, Russia. Historically speaking, the fall of Tashkent in 1865 struck the death-knell of those states; but the final blow had yet to be delivered. From the first advance of General Peroffsky into the Kirghiz steppes in 1841 down to Tchernaieff's triumph at Tashkent in 1865 it is easy to detect the main idea which pervaded the Russian policy. It was nothing more or less than to take up a paramount position on the Syr Darya, which would give Russia a supreme voice in the arrangement of affairs in Turkestan. It was also generally thought in those days that the trade of the future would follow the course of that river. The very ease with which this

consummation had been realised was provocative of a desire to proceed to a greater length and to convert the Oxus also into a Russian river. That has been already accomplished, but the due result, it is now understood, cannot be attained until Merv has been occupied and the Turcomans subjected.

It is such considerations as these which lead observers to infer that Russia will not recognise any permanent halting-place in her progress towards Southern Asia short of the sea. Towards obtaining that complete triumph Kaufmann has already done much, and he very possibly may yet have the good fortune to do more. In his first war he shattered the forces of the Ameer of Bokhara. He concluded it with the annexation of Samarcand and the Zerafshan valley. In 1871, without a war, he took the Valley of the Ili from the Tungan despot who had established his authority therein. In 1873 he triumphed over the long-offending Khiva, and as the result of that war he brought the Russian frontier down to the Oxus, and made it a Russian river. Two years afterwards he overcame the most serious

rising that has ever taken place against the Russians, and he pacified the great state of Khokand by annexing it, and making it the Russian province of Ferghana. The man, who more than any other wished and wishes to emulate the career of the great conqueror Baber, testified his admiration by reviving the picturesque name of that monarch's first province.

If, therefore, General Kaufmann's personal government does not deserve any special praise when tested by the beneficent deeds performed under it, it is at the least remarkable for the events which were crowded so rapidly one after the other into its brief space. The Russian historian will think of Kaufmann, not as the weak and neglectful administrator who looked chiefly to his own comfort and glory, but as the general under whose auspices so many victories were obtained. He will not, at least for many a year yet, inquire how far General Kaufmann's acts were marked by prudence and by foresight. He will rest satisfied with the knowledge that it was during his governor-generalship that the three Khanates of Bokhara, Khiva, and Khokand were humbled and either dis-

membered or annexed in their entirety; and that it beheld Russians dominant on the Tian Shan and supreme in the councils at Teheran, at the same time that their influence was stealthily approaching Afghanistan and the Indian frontier. The campaigns which resulted in the seizure of Samarcand, of Khokand, and of the Amou Darya district will be remembered in Russian history for all time, and the remembrance will suffice to exclude consideration of the point whether the exhibition of wisdom and true statesmanship, or of their reverse, marked Kaufmann's tenure of power.

His policy towards Khiva and Bokhara, after he had defeated them in war, is sure to come in for a large share of praise, and even his intrigues with Shere Ali will be approved of on the ground that they tended to embarrass England. The patriotic Russian will probably go still farther and express his regret that the necessities of the moment should have prevented his Government from openly and at all hazards championing the cause of that Ameer. It would be a mistake to apply too exacting a test to Kaufmann's administration of the Czar's

dominions in Central Asia, although his return to power will of necessity cause a modification of the opinions which have been expressed concerning his career on the supposition that it had closed. His return to Tashkent gives him fresh opportunities. Who can say whether he will enhance or mar the reputation he has already won?

The large part played by him in the development of the Central Asian Question has been due to the peculiar circumstances of the case rather than to the ability of the man. His own vanity prompted him to endeavour by all means in his power to precipitate the advent of the crisis between England and Russia, from which he hoped to derive great benefit. His over-eagerness on this point proves him to have been a weak man and one emphatically who did not adjust his means to the end he had in view. Just as he has filled a larger place in the past history of the question than his personal abilities or services would justify, so is it possible that we may hear more of him in the future because the time is ripening for the receipt of the reward Russia considers her due for the

labour of six generations in carrying on aggressive war beyond the Caspian and the Ural. If Kaufmann's warlike achievements have as yet been less remarkable than those of Tchernaieff and Romanoffsky—and they certainly have been less than those of Peroffsky—it is quite certain that his name will survive that of any of his predecessors, both on account of the length of his stay and also for the conquests obtained under his guidance. It would be absurd to compare Kaufmann with either Clive or Warren Hastings; but it may be expected that in the course of a few generations this Russian general will be regarded by his fellow-countrymen not only as the principal founder of the Central Asian dependency, but as holding in their history precisely the same position that the founders of British supremacy in India hold in ours.

THE LATE YAKOOB BEG.

MAHOMED YAKOOB, a Tajik of the state of Khokand, was born at Piskent, a small but flourishing village fifty miles south of Tashkent, in or about the year 1820. The Tajiks of Khokand, are not, nor have they been for a great number of years, the dominant race in that Khanate, although they are supposed by some to be the longer settled there than any of the other inhabitants of Khokand and Kashgar. They are considered to be Iranic or Persian in origin, in contradistinction to their present Turkish rulers. The Tajiks have been driven by successive tides of invasion from the plains to take refuge in the uplands of Khokand, and among the principal

of their settlements is Piskent, the birthplace of the late Athalik Ghazi. They are to be found also in most of the chief towns of this state; but it is in the hill villages that they preserve in the greatest degree the distinctive features of their race. His father, Pur Mahomed Mirza, had been Kazi of Kurama, and had moved from that place to Piskent about the year 1818. There he married a lady of an influential family, and rose high in his worldly position. Yakoob Beg was the issue of this union, and he owed much of his advancement in life to the Sheik Nizamuddin, his mother's brother. His early years were passed at Piskent, where for some time he underwent the training for a mollah. The prospect of such a profession proved distasteful to one of his active temperament, and he gave up the intention almost as soon as it had been formed. The most important event at this stage of his life was the marriage of his sister to Nur Mahomed Khan, the Governor of Tashkent.

Mahomed Yakoob, following the custom of the more active Tajik youths, entered the military service of Khokand at an early age, and

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in 1845 he was appointed Mahram, or chamberlain, to the new Khan, Khudayar. Shortly afterwards he was made Pansad Bashi, or commander of five hundred. By the year 1850 he had so far advanced in rank that he was entrusted with responsible posts on the northern frontier, and was raised to the dignity of Koosh-bege—"lord of the family"—which may be rendered deputy governor or vizier. In 1853 he had control of the garrison of Ak Musjid (White Mosque), a fort on the Syr Darya, when General Peroffsky appeared before its walls with a large Russian force. The summons to surrender was treated with scorn, and the Russian batteries were speedily constructed and in such a position as to easily overcome the slight resistance that mud walls manned by a few devoted men could offer. For twenty-five days the Russian fire swept over the insignificant stronghold, and during all those days the small garrison, encouraged by the example set them by their leader in their desperate straits, held out. Several assaults made by the Russians before the walls had been levelled with the ground

were repulsed, and the Khokandians had done everything to save their honour and to inspire a chivalrous enemy with respect for their courage. After a bombardment of nearly four weeks, the breach was at last declared practicable by the Russian engineers, and the storming parties were then ordered to be held ready. The garrison, recognising the impossibility of defending the fort any longer, agreed to surrender, and sent a letter to General Peroffsky to that effect. The general was, however, enraged at the obstinacy of the defence, and his ambition and vanity urged him to rest content with nothing less than a capture by storm. The fever for crosses of St. Anne and of St. George is an old disease among Russian officers, and General Peroffsky was one of the most deeply smitten with the complaint. The letter was torn up, and the messenger sent back to the despairing garrison with the reply, "We shall take the fort by assault." The fort was taken the next day, and has ever since been known after the name of its captor as Fort Peroffsky. That general has indeed perpetuated his name thereby in

these regions, but when the whole story is told, it cannot be said to redound greatly to his credit.

The reputation that Mahomed Yakoob acquired by this brave resistance to the Russians stood him in good stead, for about the time that the Khoja Wali Khan attempted to wrest Kashgar from the Chinese we find him high in command at Tashkent. This was in 1857, and soon afterwards he became commander-in-chief of the army of Khokand. It is not clear what part he played in Wali's invasion of Kashgar, but it is certainly justifiable to suppose that it directed his attention to that quarter, and made him inclined six years later to join in the enterprise of Buzurg Khan, the elder brother of Wali Khan. In 1863 Buzurg Khan, who had been living on the hospitality of Khokand, induced Alim Kuli, the regent of that state, to acquiesce in his leaving Tashkent to attempt to regain the kingdom of his ancestors. But permission to make the attempt summed up the aid he could obtain from Khokand. This was the first occasion on which Buzurg Khan had come to the front as the representa-

tive of the Khojas, although his father, Jehanghir Khân had, in 1827, attained a momentary success over the Chinese. Mahomed Yakoob, then the Koosh-bege Yakoob, received permission to accompany him as lieutenant, and, with only sixty-six followers, they undertook the invasion of Kashgar, garrisoned by a large Chinese force. The position of the Chinese in Kashgar had been rendered very precarious by the rebellion of the Tungani along their line of communications, and disaffection to their rule, even in Kashgar, was scarcely concealed. In the more remote districts of the state the Kirghiz and other tribes obtained some successes over the military sent against them, and the invitation of one of these chiefs had first induced Buzurg Khan to enter Kashgar as a pretender to the throne. Notwithstanding the disadvantages under which they laboured, the Chinese were successful in all the earlier engagements; an attempt to seize Kashgar by a stratagem was foiled; and for more than twelve months the adventurers were unable to accomplish anything of importance. The Andijanis, or

merchant classes, however, veered round to the cause of Buzurg Khan, and about the same time that the Russian general Tchernaieff entered Tashkent in triumph, the Khoja kings were once more reinstated as rulers in Yarkand and Kashgar by the military skill of the future Athalik Ghazi.

Buzurg Khan was not long seated on the throne of his ancestors before he showed that he possessed their hereditary vices and weaknesses. He was licentious and cruel, in addition to being cowardly and irresolute. He possessed no redeeming quality in the eyes of the soldiery to compensate for his tyranny towards his subjects. He was essentially a *roi fainéant*, and his successful general was his *maire du palais*. His lieutenant was quite resolved to possess more of the external show of power than was compatible with a subordinate position, and availing himself of the excesses of Buzurg, he deposed him before many months had elapsed after their triumph. It was said that this unfortunate prince was permitted to seek refuge in Wakhan or some other neighbouring state, but of this fact we

know nothing certain. It is quite possible that the tale of his having fled to Tibet and thence to Khokand was fabricated, and that the Athalik Ghazi adopted a surer method in dealing with his rival. Towards the commencement of the year 1866, therefore, Yakoob found himself an independent prince, in possession of the western portion of Kashgaria. His neighbours on the west and on the south were either friendly or neutral, and on the north the Russians, who might be considered inimical to him, had not yet brought their frontier into dangerous proximity with his own. In Kuldja, and in the country lying to the east of his possessions, were the Tungani — the Mahomedans who had revolted against the Chinese, and who had established a certain irregular government of their own in Jungaria and in the cities of Aksu, Kucha, Urumtsi, and Turfan. The Tungani were not prepared for the appearance of a new state founded by a victorious army and general on their flank. They had, indeed, aspired to extend the form of freedom they had secured for themselves to their fellow-countrymen further

west, and were displeased and perhaps alarmed when they found that Chinese authority was to be succeeded by a power which seemed to possess military vigour.

Before narrating the history of Yakoob Beg's relations with the Tungani, it must be stated that when the Chinese defence of Kashgar collapsed, their troops were taken into the pay of the new state, some of their leading officers were re-appointed to their former posts, and Koh Dalai, their military chief, was entrusted with supreme control over them. So far as numbers went, the Khitay troops in the service of Kashgar formed a numerous contingent, and naturally disposed to regard a war with the Tungani with peculiar favour. Being permitted to continue in the observance of their religious rites, they were probably among the most faithful soldiers at the disposal of Yakoob Beg against every foe except a Chinese army. These troops served their new master well, nor did they prove false to their trust until after Yakoob's death, and the arrival of the Chinese before the gates of Kashgar.

They then, to a man, went over to the Celestials.

Yakoob Beg, as he was now called, endeavoured at first to arrive at an amicable understanding with the Tungani, but, whatever the reason, with very partial success. His merchants demanded greater security in their journeys beyond Aksu, and a large portion of his army was eager to engage in hostilities. War was at last declared, and in several campaigns Yakoob Beg and his two sons overthrew the Tungan forces. Aksu was speedily conquered, and the whole country up to Turfan gradually passed under the sway of Kashgar. Before the year 1870 closed, the Tungan power had disappeared from the conntry south of the Tian Shan, its leaders and princes had been swept away with an unsparing hand, and the whole region round Turfan had been converted into a desert. The Chinese had found a most trenchant avenger in their own opponent; but in that year it must be admitted that there was no sign whatever that China would ever again be able to turn her attention either to Jungaria or to Kashgaria. The Russians were so

alarmed at the rapid consolidation of this Mahomedan state that they occupied Kuldja as a precautionary measure. There can be little doubt now that these operations against the Tungani were very unwise, for not only did Yakoob exhaust his own resources in subduing them, but he also lessened the task the Chinese had to accomplish when they attempted to reach Kashgar. Under the actual circumstances the Tungani disliked the Kashgarian rule quite as much as they had the Chinese, and events showed that in many cases they hastened to come to terms with the invader in 1877.

With the close of these campaigns the external affairs of Kashgaria wore a more peaceful aspect. At the hands of the Ameer of Bokhara Yakoob had received the title of Athalik Ghazi, which means Champion Father. He was also generally known as the Badaulet, or the Fortunate One. By restoring the Sunni sect of Mahomedanism, he endeavoured to attract the sympathy of all true followers of the Prophet to his cause, and his acknowledgment of the suzerainty of the Sultan was rewarded in 1873 by the title of Emir. His rule in

Eastern Turkestan was formally recognised by his neighbours, and was consolidated by such diplomatic overtures as those specified and the others which he made to the British Government. More serious matters, however, claimed his attention. Before 1870 and their seizure of Kuldja, the Russians had perceived the encouraging effect the creation of this new Mahomedan state would have on the general desire throughout their own possessions to throw off the *incubus* of Russian domination; and although they took possession of their slice of the territory of the Tungani, they were not satisfied in their own minds that it was a complete set-off to and equivalent for the growing strength and reputation of Yakoob Beg. They resolved to learn something more about this new state, and negotiations were set on foot with the view of coming to an understanding with the Athalik Ghazi, who they knew would not show much respect for the treaties which had been concluded with China. As early as 1868 a Russian merchant had attempted to enter Kashgar, but he was obliged to return with the loss of his merchandise. The next year he renewed the attempt, and

having obtained an interview with the ruler, managed to produce a favourable impression upon him. Others came, but without achieving any permanent good, either for themselves or for future traders. Before long, too, a cause of dispute between the two Governments arose in the alleged ill-treatment of a Russian merchant, and the Russian Government demanded the restitution of the sum of money in which he had been mulcted. After a very long delay the Athalik Ghazi handed the money over, but in a depreciated Chinese coin!

Although Russian officers had visited Kâshgar, and Kashgarian envoys proceeded to Tashkent, it was not until 1872, when Baron Kaulbars negotiated the treaty of commerce which bears his name, that any definite arrangement was arrived at between the two Governments. An ambassador was then despatched to St. Petersburg, and Yakoob Khan's relations with Russia seemed to hold forth a better prospect for the future. He was either distrustful of the intentions of the Russians, or he was inspired with an intelligible ambition to head a great rising throughout Asia against

their authority, for his attitude again became the reverse of cordial. He assumed on all occasions a very dignified demeanour in his interviews with Russian officers; his letters to General Kaufmann were drafted on the assumption of the writer's equality with that officer's master, the White Czar; and with the arrival of an English mission, in 1873, in his country he became still more independent, if not absolutely defiant. With a fine, but somewhat dangerous irony, when his situation is considered, he "desired permission from General Kaufmann to send an embassy to St. Petersburg, to congratulate his brother, the Czar of Russia, on the marriage of his daughter with a Prince of England, the Emir's good friend and ally."

Such a tone was not the best calculated to conciliate Russian sentiment, nor would such an attitude induce us to think very highly of the prudence of Yakoob as a politician. His refusal to admit Russian consuls within his borders was founded on a far better reason, although more than anything else it rendered the Russians less loth to proceed to extremitie

against him. In 1875 they had either so far lost patience, or had become so impressed with the necessity of checking his power, that preparations were made for the invasion of his territory both from Khokand by the Terek Pass and also from Naryn. At this crisis fortune intervened on the side of Yakoob Beg, and the serious and wide-spread rebellion in Khokand required all the Russian resources to repress it. Kashgar was saved; but if Yakoob Beg had been acting on a consistent policy of opposition to Russia, the time she was hampered by the Khokandian war would have been his opportunity for uniting in a league the whole of Western Turkestan. He hesitated, did nothing, witnessed the complete overthrow of his native country, and beheld the only occasion on which he would have had any chance in a Russian war pass away unseized. His policy up to this point had been senseless and unmeaning, unless he was prepared to follow it up when the moment for action arrived. He was apparently unnerved by a sense of the desperate peril of the enterprise to be attempted. The greatest of men have not been

free from a similar weakness, but under similar circumstances it has always passed off when the man has been truly great. The reputation of Yakoob Beg was lowered by this abstention. His subsequent conduct seemed to show that he himself afterwards became convinced that Russian friendship was preferable to Russian enmity.

It was only, however, on the eve of the Chinese invasion that he unreservedly abandoned his attitude of independence. He received Colonel Prjevalsky in a flattering manner, and treated the embassy of Captain Kuropatkine with distinguished honour. His envoy at Tashkent departing from the tradition of all previous envoys sent by his master, sued for support against the Manchu army that had carried all before it in the country north of the Tian Shan. The change came too late to do any good. The Chinese had been on friendly terms with Russia for many years, and Yakoob Beg was, till quite recently, almost a declared enemy. The Russian Government now left its two neighbours to settle the question between themselves.

In his last campaign during the early part of the year 1877, the fortune of war turned wholly against him. The Chinese expelled him from his positions round Turfan, and routed him a second time at Toksoun, where their tactics baffled his skill, and their numbers carried everything before them. Within a few weeks after his defeat he died at Korla, closing a career which will always secure for him consideration and respect. A visitor to Kashgar has described his personal appearance as follows:—"He was a short, thickish-built man, with a countenance that seemed to have attained the most complete immobility of expression. Although on a first glance his face was one that would not claim your attention, a closer inspection showed it to possess signs of great resolution and firmness." He retained to the very last the active habits that had so long distinguished him; in his dress he was simple, and his military training preserved him from those vices that had been the ruin of all his predecessors in Kashgar. Some of his journeys to the eastern portion of his extensive dominions would bear comparison for rapidity with the

most famous performances of their kind; and his iron will and prompt, if unscrupulous, resolution for many years enabled him to triumph over every obstacle. It is long, indeed, since so energetic a ruler appeared among the effete peoples of Asia. With resources ridiculously insignificant, and quite inadequate to enable him to cope with such powerful foes as Russia and China, he preserved his independence for thirteen years. He was spoken of in the capitals of Europe with respect and admiration, and the hopes and fears of two mighty countries were engrossed in the fate of his efforts to establish a stable government. His temporary success was insufficient to enable him to withstand the shock of a collision with an old empire like China, but he did all that lay in his power to produce a different result, and his failure is hardly to be ascribed to his lack of ability. As administrator, soldier, and prince, Yakoob Beg has left a name that will, at all events, provide our descendants at some remote period with a subject for historical surmise as to what might have been if the fates had been less untoward. He possessed, so

far as can be judged, the same qualities that made Genghis, Timour, and Nadir the conquerors of Asia; but he lived in a changed world. He was a great man, born several centuries too late.

KHODODAD KHAN.

THE present ruler of the country of Beloochistan, or, as he is better known, the Khan of Khelat, has proved the sincerity of his friendship towards England by his acts during the two recent campaigns in Afghanistan. It is true that much of his independence has disappeared in consequence of his conversion to the British alliance; but if such has been the case his power among his people and the great chiefs has become more vigorous than it ever was before. Instead of his authority being purely nominal, it is now recognised from Mekran to Scinde, and even that troublesome chieftain the Jam of Las Bela has refrained from

making any aggressive movement since Major Sandeman took up his residence at Khelat.

In order to make the career of Khododad intelligible to the reader it is necessary to go back to our former wars in Afghanistan, when, for a supposed breach of faith, the Khan of that day was killed in defending his town against the assault of an English army. The name of that Khan was Mehrab. Not content with this success, our authorities resolved that an elder branch of the ruling family should be installed in power. Nawaz Khan was the name of the ruler we selected, but after a brief reign, he was displaced by Nasseer Khan, son of Mehrab. Although we had originally opposed this prince, he seemed to bear no malice, and adopted a decidedly amicable policy to wards us. After the occupation of Scinde this spirit of forgiveness or of prudence showed itself in practical acts, particularly in the Treaty of 1854, by the terms of which he bound himself and his heirs to admit British garrisons within his country whenever such a step should be held to be necessary by the Calcutta Government.

Nasseer Khan did not long survive this proclamation of his friendly sentiments towards the English Government. He died suddenly, and it was more than suspected that he was got rid of by foul play. His chamberlain, Gul Mahomed, who had been one of the most trusted of the advisers of the previous ruler, Mehrab Khan, and who had suffered greatly at the time of the storming of Khelat by the British troops, was believed to have taken an active part in disposing of a ruler who had gone so far in friendly relations with his country's natural enemies. Gul Mahomed was the leader of the anti-English party, and as such bitterly opposed to the Treaty of 1854. Two years after the signature of that treaty Nasseer died under circumstances which left little doubt that he had been murdered. Gul Mahomed, of whose appearance and character Mr. Masson gives the most unfavourable description, was the only man who would have dared to take this extreme measure, and the only one whose animosity towards the English was sufficiently keen to encourage him to incur all the risk of putting himself forward as

their adversary. He told Mr. Masson that he never saw or thought of an Englishman without blood coming to his eyes. This was the man generally credited with being the murderer of Nasseer, and the minister under whose auspices Khododad, the present Khan, commenced his reign.

Mir Khododad Khan, youngest son of Mehrab, was born after his father's death in 1841. He was only fifteen years of age when he succeeded his brother as Khan. Gul Mahomed evidently expected that he would be able to mould the character of this youth to a fashion he approved of, and anticipated little opposition to his plan for thwarting the scheme lately formed for an Anglo-Belooch alliance. The years which followed the signature of the Treaty of 1854 were apathetic ones on our part. General Jacob's vigorous propositions were little heeded, and no advance of British troops took place through the Bolan. The petty chieftains of Beloochistan and the intriguers of Khelat were thus left to their own devices. They might quarrel between themselves, depose one ruler and create

another, as much and as often as they chose. The British Government concerned themselves not therein, and regarded the whole affair with indifference. But Gul Mahomed's power was incommensurate with the scope of his designs. The Sirdars, whose position closely resembled that of the Daimios of Japan before the late reassertion of authority on the part of the Mikado, paid but a grudging obedience to the edicts of the Khan or his minister, and finally set them at defiance. Gul Mahomed had a hard task to perform, and at length it proved too much for his strength. The force of circumstances was more than he could resist.

This was the state of affairs in Khelat when Khododad mounted the throne of his murdered brother. On the one hand a dissatisfied people, on the other a confederacy of turbulent chieftains; in the palace a party headed by an ambitious and unscrupulous intriguer, in the country no devotion towards the ruler, and general discontent at the tyranny of the Sirdars. Under these adverse circumstances was Khododad, a mere boy, called upon to take the supreme place in the state. In the disunion

of the country the new Khan found an unexpected stability for himself. His importance was enhanced by the fact that the two principal rival parties in the state were so evenly balanced that the one which could employ his name with the greater show of right was the one to which it seemed fortune would finally incline. Gul Mahomed was the leader of the one party, which, holding the "miri," or citadel, of Khelat, may be called the Palace party; and Mir Khan, the powerful Jam of Las Bela, the leader of the other. During the year 1857 several attempts were made by the latter to seize the person of the Khan, and it was only the arrival of Lieutenant Macaulay, of the Scinde Horse, which prevented serious consequences accruing from the excited state of the public mind. In November 1857 Khododad, acting under the advice of Major, the present Major-General Sir Henry, Green, dismissed Gul Mahomed; and thus twelve months after this crafty and ambitious minister had thought that the whole game was in his hands, he found himself in disgrace and deprived of all power. To Gul Ma-

homed succeeded as Wazir Shahgassi Wali Mahomed, who is still the most trusted of the Khan's ministers.

But at this time the character of the young Khan was still only partially formed. Capricious in common with all Eastern potentates in his likes and dislikes, he had not yet made up his mind that his wisest policy would be to throw himself heartily into the arms of the English. He owed his elevation to a man whose anti-British proclivities were notorious, and it is not to be supposed that he could wholly escape the contaminating influence of his example. The Sirdars showed their indifference to his authority by waging petty wars with each other. Sarawan and Jhalawan revealed their mutual hostility without equivocation, and the unfortunate ruler exhibited at once the weakness and the irksomeness of a position of which he was unable to fulfil the duties. In 1860 the Khan took the first active step towards making his authority respected by leading an expedition against the chiefs on the borders of Mekran. The result was eminently satisfactory. The disturbed districts were pacified, and many

of the local Khans returned with the ruler to Khelat. But the effect of this fit of resolution was nullified by an act of which it is impossible to say anything save in terms of condemnation.

Khododad had been engaged in marriage to the daughter of the leading Sirdar of Jhalawan, Taj Mahomed Zehai; but breaking off from his betrothal, which among the Brahooes is a most serious engagement, he married in 1862 this chief's sister, and the widow of his own brother. Not only did this give a great shock to the national customs, but its effect was aggravated by the circumstance that the lady was the bitter foe of her brother. The powerful baron at once plotted his revenge, and, being joined by many others of his order, he headed a revolution in 1863 for the purpose of deposing Khododad, and installing his cousin, Shere dil Khan, in his place. The Khan was surprised in his camp near Gundava in Kachhi, and compelled to flee into Scinde, where he remained until the assassination of Shere dil Khan by the captain of the body-guard in May of the following year. The great Sirdar

of Sarawan, Mollah Mahomed Raisani, then stood forward as the champion of the cause of Khododad, who was soon reinstated in his former position. The lull was not of long duration, and a greater danger than any before beset the Khan.

The Sirdars of Jhalawan and Sarawan combined against him, and the two powerful magnates, whose names have been mentioned, formed a plot, not only for his overthrow, but also for his assassination. They were not as successful as might have been expected. Mahomed Raisani escaped to Candahar, but his confederate, not so fortunate, was taken prisoner, and died at Khelat in 1867. The year 1865 continued to be full of dangers to the newly returned Khan, for scarcely had the rising just described been repressed, than another and more carefully organised rebellion broke out. The Jam of Las Bela, who, as the husband of the Khan's sister, imagined that he had some chance of obtaining supreme power, allied himself with the chief of Wadd, a place of some importance between Khelat and Bela; and the Khan was

compelled to send such troops as he could collect against these ambitious vassals. Fortune smiled upon his arms. Their followers were scattered, and they themselves were made prisoners, only to be pardoned and released by their conqueror. The clemency of the ruler found but an ill return, for three years afterwards the same Sirdars were again in open rebellion, but the energy of the Khan foiled their machinations.

In the following year, however, the Khan was hard pressed. A considerable force appeared before Khelat, and but for the tact of the British Resident, Captain Harrison, who arranged the difficulty, it would probably have gone hard with Khododad. A few months afterwards the Khan's troops were completely victorious in an encounter with the Jam's army, and that chief was glad to find safety in flight. The credit of this decided success was due to the Wazir Wali Mahomed, who led the Khan's troops in the field. Another rising occurred in 1871, and the same minister took an active part in repressing it; but, unfortunately, the later portion of the campaign

had to be entrusted to an incompetent officer, and the rebels continued to cause disturbances in Kachhi and round the Bolan. These repeated disorders, and the great danger which they gave rise to for all those who traded between Scinde and Beloochistan, had reached such a pass, the authority of the Khan being little more than nominal, that the Commissioner of Scinde, Sir William Merewether, on the authority of the British Government, intervened for the purpose of reconciling the conflicting pretensions of Khan and Sirdars. The result of the negotiations, which took place at Jacobabad, should have been to satisfy the demands of the Sirdars, and to consolidate the power and increase the authority of the Khan. But for some reason, far from clear, Khododad was not well content with the arrangement, and did not hide his dissatisfaction. His old civility to the British Resident cooled, and his trusted and faithful Wazir, Wali Mahomed, fell into disfavour. The latter was obliged to flee for safety to the British Residency; but, after the Khan had been remonstrated with, the

Wazir was reinstated in office if not in favour.

The anti-English party still retained considerable influence in the palace, Khododad's mother and sister being its principal supporters. Although he had interviews with Lord Northbrook at Sukhur in November 1872, and with the Scinde Commissioner at Shahpore in February of the following year, it became clear that the Khan was more indifferent than had been supposed to the English alliance. He also conceived a personal antipathy for Major Harrison, and took into his confidence inferior officials of bad character. At last things reached such a point that the British officer was withdrawn, the allowance made to the Khan stopped, and the Wazir Wali Mahomed left the country to take refuge for a second time within English territory. The ill humour of the Khan did not confine itself to sentiment. It found expression in several raids committed within the Scinde frontier; and in 1874 the border authorities tendered the advice that a force should be sent to Khelat to convince Khododad that we would not tolerate

either apathy or a semi-hostile attitude on his part. Lord Northbrook declined to sanction this extreme measure. The Khan was to be left entirely to his own devices, and deprived of the subsidy on which he had mainly depended; it being confidently anticipated that in a short time he would have to come round to his old line of policy.

In 1875 he was compelled, by the necessities of his position, to make overtures to us. His chief Sirdars were on the eve of open rebellion, and without money the Khan could not act vigorously against them. It was also said that the Ameer of Afghanistan had shown a disposition to profit by the severance of friendly relations with the Indian Government to advance the old claims of the Duranis over the Khan of Khelat. But whatever the causes, Khododad is again found in friendly communication with the Scinde authorities in 1876, and Major Sandeman's negotiations resulted in an arrangement which appears to have placed the relations between England and Khelat on a basis of permanent amity. The military occupation of Quettah, the paci-

fication of the Bolan and its vicinity, and the installation of the Khan as one of the feudatories of the Indian Empire, all mark the events since 1876 as being of a character entirely different from those that occurred before that year. They also conclusively prove that the day has passed by when the idiosyncrasy of the Khelat ruler was a matter of prime importance. He has taken his place in the ranks of those native luminaries who surround the throne of the Empress of India, and his principal distinction will probably consist in being regarded as among the most faithful of the native princes.

But it has not always been so, and this slight sketch of his career may have served to show that there have been times when he thought that his true policy was one of hostility, and not of friendship, to this country. The old dreams of ambition are abandoned; and with the recognition of a practical necessity, the figure of Khododad has lost much of its romantic proportions. As an independent prince he was a picturesque personage enough. In many respects he was not much above the level of an

untamed savage, but the traditions which the Brahoo warrior inherited sufficed to elevate him to a higher pedestal. It should also be remembered that the time may come when he may be anxious to change his new-found sense of security for the old game of chance, in which, if there was greater risk, there was certainly less irksomeness. His Sirdars have evinced still more satisfaction than he has at the new arrangements—a fact which is at the least conducive to their stability; and with each year's continued tranquillity the probability of disturbance decreases. The personal character of the Khan becomes a matter of less importance, and while the Indian Empire can boast of one great vassal the more, it is a circumstance of practical significance that the addition of his estates to our Empire has made us the immediate neighbour of the Persian kingdom.

MAHOMED KHAN OF KHIVA.

THE political power of the ruler of Khiva having practically disappeared, and the hold of Russia on the state being much more distinct in form than is the case with Bokhara, it is both difficult and unnecessary to say much concerning a ruler who, although representing the oldest dynasty in Turkestan, possesses little or no individuality. If it were permissible to devote our attention to the past history of the monarchs of Khwaresm, or if it entered into the province of this work to give a detailed account of the last Russian war with Khiva, this sketch would, of course, expand to a much greater bulk than we contemplate, our object

being simply to narrate in a few words the career of the present Khan.

Mahomed Rahim Bahadur Khan succeeded his father as Khan of Khiva in the year 1866. In Khiva, alone among Mahomedan countries, the rights of primogeniture exist. They are a relic of their Mongol ancestry. The present ruler is the eleventh in lineal descent of the same family, and, so far as can be ascertained, he was born in or about the year 1849. On coming to the throne he appears to have taken the reins of power into his hands at once, without submitting to the tutelage of any ambitious official. An English officer* who had an interview with him describes him as looking about eight and twenty in 1875. He is taller than the average of his subjects, "being quite five feet ten in height and strongly built." On the whole his personal appearance tells in his favour and is very pleasing. In fact he may be said to have very prepossessing manners, and the traveller just quoted says that the

* Major Burnaby in "A Ride to Khiva."

Spanish expression *muy sinpatico* (very engaging) may be applied to him. And despite the stories that used to be current in Russian circles of his cruelty towards prisoners, there is a concurrence of evidence that not only was he a good-natured man in private life, and considerate in his dealings with his subjects, but that he also treated both his personal and national enemies with generosity.

As regards the latter, the testimony of the Russian subjects who were detained in Khiva should be conclusive. There were twenty-one of these prisoners surrendered on the eve of the Expedition in 1873. The narrative of their enforced residence at Khiva proved highly interesting, from the fact that some of them had been captives for several years. Most of them had been captured by the Kirghiz on the Emba steppe, and had been carried off to Khiva to be sold. There they had been purchased by the Khan for his own use, and he appears to have employed them, for the most part, as gardeners in his palace outside the walls of the town. It is to this spot that he retires during the months of June and July; and here at that

season of the year the Court is held in the open air under the shade of fruit-trees and of vines. The gardens have been described as laid out in perfect order, and evincing much better taste than could be expected of a Central Asian ruler. This is, no doubt, to be attributed to the example and labours of these Russian prisoners, and it may reasonably be supposed that the Khivans, after their departure, imitated their labours and strove to keep the gardens in the state of efficiency to which the Russian labourers had raised them.

At first the Russian prisoners were subjected to the same treatment as the Persian slaves, which was none of the most lenient. Their diet was limited, and harsh usage was resorted to with the object of making them become Mussulmans. But in a short time this came to the ears of the Khan, and he at once put a stop to it, declaring that no one should be compelled to change his religion. If the Russian slaves were to be converted, they must be so of their own free will. He also appears to have taken measures for the alleviation of their

hardships, and on numerous occasions they affirmed that he used to enter into good-humoured conversation with them. These tributes to the personal kindliness of the Khan are of particular value, as they were made at a time when it required great strength of mind on the part of a Russian subject to say anything in favour of the Khivan ruler, who, in official despatches and newspapers, was held forth to public obloquy as a monster of cruelty and brutality.

The political career of the Khan may be said to have commenced with those disturbances caused by the Kirghiz attempting to shake off the authority of Russia. These risings culminated in the attacks on the chain of posts in the Uralsk region in 1869, but within a few months after the chief success of the insurgents the Russians were congratulating themselves that all the danger had passed away. This was not due to their energy or to the skill of their combinations; but was accounted for simply by the fact that the movement, lacking a head, had died out of its own accord. In these events Mahomed Khan had played but

a minor part. Khiva, indeed, held towards the Kirghiz of that day much the same relation that Merv does at the present to the Turcomans; but its Khan had extended to the enemies of Russia only a benevolent sympathy, and not an active support. Before this period the Khan had received communications from General Kaufmann respecting the raids carried on by Kirghiz, who, crossing the Syr Darya, had entered Russian territory.

The replies sent by the Khan's orders to these representations were couched in a haughty tone. The offenders were subjects of Khiva, and consequently under his jurisdiction alone; but the raids continued. But gradually the tone of his letters became more argumentative, and the dispute changed into a frontier question. The appearance of the Russians on the eastern shore of the Caspian had much to do with this change, and the foundation of Krasnovodsk by Colonel Stoletoff was a menace to Khiva, to which the Khan could not show himself indifferent. The year 1870 witnessed an outbreak on a still larger scale than that which had occurred during the previous

year. The Khan took a more active share in the war. It was his emissaries who stirred up both Kirghiz and Turcomans to a joint effort for the expulsion of the Russians; and he sent a small body of Khivan troops to their assistance.

At first fortune smiled on their enterprise, and the result was sufficiently encouraging to show how different the result of all these Central Asian wars might have been had the defenders of their country been possessed of better weapons. In the vicinity of Mangishlak the Kirghiz were most energetic. A Russian detachment under the command of Colonel Rukin was surprised and cut to pieces. The officer in command shot himself* when he saw there was no hope left, and a few of the soldiers were sent as prisoners to Khiva. The Kirghiz followed up this success by attacking several of the Russian posts on the Caspian. The Nicolai station was burnt, some light-

* This act shows that the traditions of their Tartar origin are still a vital force among the Russians. A Manchu soldier would probably have done the same.

ships were destroyed, and a vigorous attack was made on the fort at Novo-Alexandrovsk. The fort was on the point of surrendering to the assailants when reinforcements arrived from the Caucasus, and the Kirghiz were repulsed.* Military demonstrations on a small scale served to keep the frontier tranquil, and the friendly Kirghiz more than neutralised those of a hostile disposition. The only question that remained to be treated was the chastisement of Khiva.

Various projects had been formed and approved of for the invasion of Khiva and the punishment of its Khan. In 1870 the Czar had given his formal consent to a plan submitted by General Kaufmann for the despatch of an expedition against Khiva; but various circumstances prevented its being carried into effect. Although deferred, the design was not abandoned; and the Ameer of Bokhara attempted

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* Von Helwald asserts that the fort was taken and destroyed, the garrison being put to the sword. His information was, however, incorrect.

to mediate between the disputants. His overtures were not received in good part at Khiva, where it was held that the dignity of the Khan demanded that the negotiations should be carried on with the Governor-General himself. The years 1871 and 1872 were passed in these idle negotiations on the one hand, and in active military preparations on the part of Russia on the other. The Khan took alarm at the steady concentration of troops upon his borders, and thinking that these hostile measures were due solely to the ambitious desires of the authorities at Tashkent, endeavoured to enter into negotiations with those at Orenburg and Tiflis. The move was an astute one, but it came too late. The Khivan expedition must be carried out. The Khanate, which was identified with every Russian reverse in the past, must feel the weight of Russia's hand. In his distress the Khan sent an envoy to India entreating British assistance. He was told the wisest thing his master could do would be "to make peace with Russia, obey her demands, and give no cause for further dissatisfaction." Considering what Kaufmann wanted, Mahomed

Khan* may well have exclaimed, on receiving that message of cold comfort, "But how?"

In the year 1873 everything was in readiness for an advance upon Khiva. The difficulty of the campaign was known to consist in the task of getting there; so the strategists of Tashkent were busily engaged in selecting march-routes, and in deciding on positions for depôts. Their claims to the title of strategists would appear doubtful in the eyes of generals at Berlin, because when these details had been carefully arranged they were all changed at a moment's notice in order that an officer† might qualify for a decoration. It is unnecessary to follow the course of this campaign further than to say that in April 1873

* Controversial politics are excluded from these pages as much as possible; but the historical student will derive instruction from contrasting the policy followed in 1872 with that adopted in 1839–40. In those years English officers, Abbott and Shakespeare, were the liberators of Russian slaves at Khiva. In 1872 we could only advise submission to Russian dictation.

† General Troitzky, a bungling officer, who nearly met with disaster during the Khokandian war at Andijan.

everything was in readiness for the march, and on the 29th of May the Russian force arrived on the right bank of the Oxus. In five days General Kaufmann's division had crossed that river, which divides Western Asia into two distinct regions, differing in polity and race, and the destinies of which have been, and should always be, swayed by different circumstances.

The preparations made by Mahomed Khan appear to have been feeble in the extreme. Some slight attempt was made to defend the crossing of the Oxus, but of so insignificant a nature that a few hours' bombardment sufficed to overcome it. He seems to have indulged the hope that the surrender of the Russian prisoners would have turned aside the wrath of their Government. He wrote at this time, "If you want anything else, say so; according to our ability we will fulfil it." The advance of the Muscovite battalions was not to be stayed, and on the 10th of June Khiva fell into the hands of the Russians. A treaty of peace was concluded with Mahomed Khan, who threw himself upon the generosity of his

conquerors, and after remaining a few months in occupation the Russian army withdrew. The most important of the terms exacted were—the cession of the territory on the right bank of the Oxus, the surrender to Russia of the exclusive right to navigate the river, and the abolition of slavery, in addition to the imposition of a heavy war indemnity, and the disbandment of the whole of the Khan's armed forces. These terms made Khiva a vassal state. She is far more powerless in the hands of Russia than the Nizam or any of the Mahratta states is in those of England.

Since that year the Khan, who is of an easy-going disposition, has become more and more subservient to the Czar. He lives happily, it is said, on his private income, and of late that income has been steadily increasing. One of his brothers is in a Russian cavalry regiment. Many of his relations and former ministers are to be met in the palaces of Moscow and St. Petersburg, whither, in a few short years, the present Khan may very possibly proceed to join them. Every day makes it more and more

probable that the Khans of Central Asia will develop into Russian noblemen, and that men, whose hands are now only beginning to drop the reins of power, will disappear from the scene on which they might have played so bold a part, to take their place among those descendants of ancient or forgotten heroes, of whom Prince Tchinghiz* is, if not the most prominent, certainly the most remarkable. Among these Mahomed Rahim Khan, a descendant in another line of the greatest of conquerors, will be, for the sake of historical association, not the least noticeable.

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* This prince is the son of the last Khan of the Bukeief Horde, who assisted the Russian Government very much in their dealings with the Kirghiz.

IZZET KUTEBAR.

When Russia began to make her way from the almost impenetrable forests of the ancient Scythia in search of more favoured provinces, she entered upon a course of which the initial stage involved the overcoming of the natural difficulties presented by the vast expanse of steppe land which stretched beyond her frontier. But sparse as was the herbage, and limited as were the productions of "that great sea of moorland," as it has been called, there were scattered over it in all directions myriads of nomad tribes, who, wandering as a rule without any further object in view than the search for pasturage, had sometimes, in past times, produced conquerors of the first order, and given

kings and dynasties to the states of Central Asia. With these Kirghiz tribes Russia had, at an early stage of her mission, established relations, which were far from being altogether of an unfriendly character. But when the Czars of Muscovy began to encroach beyond the Ural, troubles naturally ensued, for they were advancing into the camping-grounds of a people whose passionate love of freedom had impelled them to leave their original and more favoured abode for one less advantageous near the Russian frontier. The relations of Russia with the three Hordes of the Kirghiz cannot be discussed here, although the theme would be a most interesting one; for the Russians encountered, during the one hundred and forty years that they were engaged in overpowering them, a more gallant resistance than any they have since met with. It is our immediate object to sketch the career of one who was the latest, if not the most remarkable, of the robber chieftains of the steppe.

In the year 1824 the Russian Government had changed the principle upon which it had hitherto gone in its dealings with the Kirghiz.

Their country was then divided into three districts, and over each a Sultan Regent was appointed. But the Russian authorities bungled the arrangements most grievously. Their regents were men of no mark, and the tribes paid little attention to rulers who were nothing more than Russian officers. The heart of the people still went with their Khans, leaders whose claims to authority had come down to them from remote generations, and it only required one of these to set himself up as an independent chieftain to bring to his banner hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of Kirghiz warriors. Some, indeed, of these Sultan Regents were Khans themselves, but when this was the case they were generally to be found at the head of the revolts against Russian rule. Several of these have obtained a permanent place in history, and among them may be mentioned the great chiefs Syrym and Kenisar.

But the subject of this memoir was neither a Sultan Regent by rank nor a Khan by birth. He was essentially an adventurer who rose to prominence by dint of daring. Izzet Kutebar, the son of Kutebar the celebrated

robber chief of an earlier day, was born about the commencement of the present century. He assisted his father in several of his enterprises, and when on his father's death he became the most prominent man of his clan, he had already won a considerable reputation among his fellow tribesmen. In 1822 his earliest exploit, the plundering of a large Bokharan caravan, had marked him out as one of more than ordinary audacity, and in the years following, down to 1842, he had shown remarkable daring in carrying on raids within Russian territory, both upon the Kirghiz settlements, Cossack posts, and Russian caravans. At the moment when the English officers, Abbott and Shakespear, were residing at Khiva, this chieftain was at the zenith of his success as a leader of a marauding band. Neither the energy nor the rewards of the Russian authorities availed to circumvent the deeply laid schemes of this astute partizan. In 1844, however, he appears to have arrived at the conclusion that it would be better to come to a pacific understanding with the Russians, more especially as General Peroffsky was beginning to show signs of that

activity which in a few years carried Russian arms to the Aral and the Jaxartes. For a short time he even played the part of informer for the Russian officials, and gave them considerable information concerning the state of affairs at Khiva. He ingratiated himself with one of the Sultan Regents, who, believing in his sincerity, obtained a gold medal from St. Petersburg as a reward for his proffered services. Before, however, this medal arrived from Europe, Izzet had thrown off the mask of friendship which he had assumed, and again figured as the terror of the steppe. The gold medal was reserved for some more deserving recipient.*

Up to this point, Izzet Kutebar had been simply a successful leader of robbers. He

* The facts are far from clear. Reference is made to this circumstance by Vambery and the Messrs. Michell. Prof. Gregorieff, in his acrimonious criticism of the former's "History of Bokhara," curtly says that "Vambery has no idea of what he is talking of when he speaks of the gold medal given to Kutebarof." Certainly the Sultan Regent, Bai Mahomed, obtained one for him from the St. Petersburg authorities.

had been, as he has been called by one English writer, the Rob Roy of the Steppe. The reputation which he had acquired by his successes in this character stood him in good stead when he aspired to play a greater and a nobler part. At the least it always brought men to his standard. No young Kirghiz brave was loth to follow the Knight of the Steppe—another of the titles which have been bestowed upon this chief—whether the enterprise in hand were the plundering of a caravan, the surprise of a convoy, or a sudden attack upon one of the numerous Russian blockhouses which dotted the Kirghiz steppe in all directions. From the year 1847 until 1853, events progressed much after this fashion. The Kirghiz leader was no longer compelled to seek refuge each year in remote Khiva, but found that he was perfectly safe from the Russian attempts at pursuit in the northern portion of the Ust Urt plateau. In 1853 the capture of the Khokandian fort of Ak Musjid raised the reputation of Russia to a higher point than ever among the Kirghiz, and many of them were not much distressed at the blow which had been inflicted upon the

Khokandian Government. But Izzet Kutebar held aloof. He had not even cared to conceal his hostility towards the Russians while Peroffsky's expedition was in progress. By his influence several of the Kirghiz clans had been induced to decline to assist the Russian commander; and when Ak Musjid had been taken and a Khokandian relieving army defeated, it was resolved that active measures should be adopted for his chastisement. In 1854 a force was sent in pursuit of him, and for the first and last time Izzet was surprised and taken prisoner. This was, apparently, accomplished in an unfair manner, for the Russian commander had previously promised him a safe-conduct to a conference. However, Izzet, on the strength of that agreement, and after making numerous promises of amendment, was permitted to depart.

Instead of being overcome with the generosity of his enemy, Kutebar saw in the infringement of the understanding an additional reason for resentment. He threw himself into the arms of the Khan of Khiva and openly set the Russians at defiance. He appealed to all

of Kirghiz race to join in the war against the infidel. He issued proclamations, the ring of which would have roused a frenzy throughout the steppe that could at an earlier day have only been appeased after severe fighting. His war-cry went the round of the auls, and in each kibitka it could not fail to rouse feelings that were dormant rather than extinct. "Steeds and arms they have; have we not the like? Are we not as numerous as the sands of the ocean? Wheresoever ye turn—whether towards the east or the west, or towards the north or the south—ye surely find Kirghiz. Wherefore, then, should we submit to a handful of strangers?"

His boldness met with its just recompense. The first successes in the desultory war which ensued were his. He routed a mixed body of Kirghiz and Cossacks sent against him. A larger force was despatched against him. He eluded it, and carried on depredations in its rear. He was on the shores of the Caspian one week; the next he was on the steppe. At one time he and his band escaped by retreating through a sandy morass, over which the Russians

could not march; at another, when surrounded by three detachments, he passed through one of the intervening spaces at night-time. When the Russians thought they had the prize in their hands, he slipped between their fingers, and was gone. There could, of course, be only one end to this warfare, but the process was exhausting, and the officials of the Czar grew sick of the pursuit of one who seemed to be intangible. The year 1855 closed, too, with a complete success for him. He surprised on the Temir river a small band of Cossacks and Kirghiz allies, all of whom, with the exception of one Cossack who escaped wounded, were slain.

Although Kutebar himself always succeeded in escaping, the Kirghiz suffered greatly. The great mass of his kinsmen had remained indifferent to his appeals, and had given the Russians active assistance. During the years 1856 and 1857 his places of refuge were becoming fewer and fewer, his followers were dwindling in numbers and growing fainter in spirit. On the other hand, the Russian pursuit was as keen as ever. In his last extre-

mities he had filled up the wells to retard the Russian movements, but this desperate remedy compelled him to seek other camping-places, some of which were near the Russian line of forts. In one of them he was surprised, and escaped only with a few followers. The Russians had recovered from the Crimean war, and their troops were concentrating in greater force on the Syr Darya. The heart had been taken out of the Kirghiz. Their powers of resistance were insignificant, and even the voice of Izzet Kutebar failed to bring any force around him. It was at this stage that the Gövernor-General of Orenburg, General Katenin, offered him honourable terms, which he at once accepted, and in 1859 Izzet Kutebar became a respected guest at St. Petersburg.

The life of this Kirghiz leader forms one episode in that silent warfare which has been carried on without any intermission, during a century and a half, between the Russians and the nomads of the steppe. It clearly shows that these people had aspirations much higher than those with which they have been credited. It was Russia which commenced the war, essen-

tially one of aggression. A position—inviting attack—was taken up within the Kirghiz zone, "not for a day, not for a year, but for ever," as the Russian proclamations love to express the Czar's paternal affection for his new peoples. It was in vain that the Kirghiz hurled themselves against a barrier which was impenetrable to their puny efforts. They did not fail wholly because they had no worthy leaders, for they had several; but because they were too disunited to combine. Of those leaders, Izzet Kutebar was the man who, with means quite insignificant, did most for the preservation of his independence. He was a born leader of men, and may be considered to have had in him the makings of one of those great soldiers of which the soil of Asia has in past times been most prolific.

ABDERRAHMAN (BARUCKSYE).

LEADING at present the life of an exile in Russian territory, banished from his country and removed from the sphere of active politics, Abderrahman, or Abdul Rahman, Khan, the son of Afzul the eldest of all the sons of Dost Mahomed, is far too important an individual to be excluded from the portrait gallery of Central Asian celebrities. Eleven years have passed away since he succumbed to fate on the field of Tinah Khan, but although he has sunk into the obscurity of a Russian pensioner, his career has very probably not yet reached its conclusion, and it is certain that the people of one portion of Afghanistan still look to him as their natural leader. This is due partly to his great

talents, and partly to the fact that when his party was victorious he imitated neither the indolence of his father nor the tyranny of his uncle Azim.

Of his early life little or nothing is known. He is said to have been born about the year 1830, and to have taken part in the second campaign in the Punjab, when Akbar crossed the Indus to aid the Sikhs. He did not come prominently forward until a much later period. In 1863 the death of Dost Mahomed was the signal for the outbreak of disturbances, which in the following year developed themselves in civil war. The first campaign between Shere Ali, the rightful Ameer, and his elder brother Afzul, closed with the discomfiture of the latter, who was nothing loth to come to an understanding with his successful brother. A truce was accordingly negotiated between them at Balkh, and while Afzul swore fealty to Shere Ali on the Koran, the latter took a similar oath that Afzul's liberty should not be interfered with. This reconciliation lasted but a short time, and it is said that this was due to the intrigues of Abderrahman, very dis-

satisfied with the surrender of his father's pretensions. Be that as it may, the tranquillity of the camp at Balkh was very soon disturbed by the arrest of Afzul and the flight of Abderrahman. While Shere Ali returned with his captive brother to Cabul in order to encounter the rebels in other quarters of the state, Abderrahman fled for safety to Bokhara, where he met with a kind reception. He remained there until after Shere Ali had defeated Ameen at Kujhbaz and driven Azim into English territory; but when he perceived Shere Ali, far from following up his successes, to be sunk in a state of apathy at Candahar, he crossed the Oxus with an irregular force and easily established his authority in Balkh.

Abderrahman's success north of the Hindoo Koosh did not suffice to rouse Shere Ali to a sense of the dangers which surrounded him. With Cabul as well as Candahar in his possession, he remained apparently of opinion that the moment for re-establishing his authority in the outlying portions of the state might be deferred until a more convenient season. Abderrahman measured the situation more cor-

rectly. He saw the fatal mistake the Ameer was making in his delusion as to the stability of his own power, and he resolved to take prompt measures for deriving the greatest possible benefit from the blunders of his rival. He struck hard and he struck quick. In February 1866 he had been joined by Azim, and was in the close neighbourhood of Cabul, held at that time by Ibrahim, Shere Ali's second son. On the 2nd of March the city surrendered, and Azim was installed as temporary ruler. This success was followed up by a decided victory at Shaikhabad, of which the immediate consequences were the release of Afzul and the capture of Ghizni. Afzul then became the recognised Ameer at Cabul, and his son was looked upon as the Hotspur of the confederacy. His right to this title was shown still more conclusively at the crowning victory of Khelat-i-Ghiljie in the early part of 1867.

Neither Afzul nor Azim was proof against his unexpected good fortune. The former, proclaimed Ameer in the Bala Hissar, and recognised as such by the Indian Government, degenerated into a drunkard, and his death was

precipitated, if it was not caused, by the excesses which he committed after his release from confinement. Azim, without copying the indolent vices of his brother, had also become a petty tyrant. Much of his brother's faults could be traced to his influence, and in the distribution of the chief posts, he secured the most important for himself and his son. Several of the leading men in the country were cast into prison by his orders, and one of the most notable was put to death. Matters became still worse after Afzul's death. There was a critical moment when it seemed as if Abderrahman would refuse to recognise his uncle as Ameer. By a violent exercise of his will, however, he suppressed his personal feelings and took a formal oath of allegiance to his uncle. But he quitted Cabul in disgust, and retired to Afghan Turkestan, with the administration of which province his uncle entrusted him.

While discontent with the authority of Azim was rendering the most able of Shere Ali's opponents less enthusiastic in his cause, the latter unfortunate ruler was making another effort for the recovery of his rights with the aid of fresh

troops from Herat, and the then untried abilities of his younger son Yakoob. After his victory on the Helmund, and the flight of Azim's son from Candahar, it became necessary for Azim to collect all the forces within reach, and Abderrahman was accordingly requested to hurry up with his troops from Balkh. Yakoob Khan was, however, too quick for him. By forced marches from Ghizni he reached Bamian first, and there inflicted a severe defeat on Abderrahman. In the winter campaign of 1868, the latter was not more fortunate, being signally defeated by Yakoob at Tinah Khan. The civil war closed with that battle. Azim and Abderrahman escaped by Washir to Meshed, whence the latter travelled "through the steppe of the Teke Turcomans to Urgentch (Khiva)." * From that place he went on to Bokhara, whence he wrote to General Kaufmann, requesting permission to reside within Russian territory. Abderrahman was accorded

* Another version is that he fled to Balkh, and thence to Bokhara. Azim died on the road between Seistan and Meshed.

a friendly reception, but all his requests for assistance either in arms, men, or moral support, for the purpose of making war afresh in Afghanistan, were rejected. Instead of complying with these demands, the Russian Government allotted him a pension of twenty-five thousand roubles a year, and Mr. Schuyler has told us that for the last nine years he has been living upon one-fifth of his allowance. If so, he must have saved during that period close upon two hundred thousand roubles, the significance of this fact consisting in the circumstance that in 1872 he told General Kaufmann he could raise up an insurrection in Afghanistan if half that sum were given to him.

During the eleven years that he has now spent in enforced exile, it is quite possible that Abderrahman may have deteriorated in mental vigour. Something of the sickness of despair must have weakened his resolution. Mr. Schuyler's description of him conveys a very favourable impression of his force of character; but then that was several years ago and may be no longer applicable. Assuming, however, that

Abderrahman still retains his old energy, there is little doubt that he has from the first greatly exaggerated his influence with the Afghans. He was much in the habit of declaring that he had only to come forward to bring the whole population to his side, and that Shere Ali's endeavours to prevent his name being mentioned in Cabul did but make people think the more about him. These random assertions had very little foundation in fact. It is true that Abderrahman had done nothing like his father and uncle to alienate popular sentiment; but then he was comparatively an unknown man. His reputation as a soldier, which had at one time been considerable, had paled before that of his cousin Yakoob. There is not the slightest reason for believing that the Afghan people, who have no great affection for any of the Barucksye House, reserve any special regard for the son of Afzul. He, practically speaking, vanished from their mind after his defeat at Tinah Khan.

But if in the eyes of the Afghan people he counts for little, it is different in the special province which was entrusted during many

years to his charge. In Turkestan, from Balkh to Badakshan, his influence is considerable. As governor he is remembered as the best of the last generation. The exactions of his uncle, Faiz Mahomed, are still the highest contrast to the moderation of Abderrahman. As soldiers the Usbegs took a personal interest in his successes, and sympathised with him in his defeats, for it was they who fought and bled under him. Since his flight, too, an additional motive has been given for their affection by his marriage with the daughter of Jehandir Shah, ex-chief of Badakshan. For these reasons Abderrahman could, no doubt, collect a considerable force in this region, and probably establish his authority in Afghan Turkestan. The first step has already been taken in such an enterprise by the success of his wife's near relation, Mir Baba, who has ousted Shere Ali's nominee from Faizabad, and is now the *de facto* ruler of Badakshan. In this fact lies Abderrahman's importance, and his value to Russia depends on the same circumstance. More than that, the man who can, without foreign aid, firmly establish his power in any

one portion of what is known as Afghanistan, is one who must be taken into serious account, for his influence might in a short time become considerable in the other portions of the state. He might even aspire to play the part of a national champion; and certainly, with Abderrahman in possession of Balkh and his close ally installed at Faizabad, there would be no peace of mind for the chief of Cabul, even though he were under the shadow of British protection.*

* Since the preceding pages were written, the description of General Kaufmann's entry (17th November) into Tashkent on his return from Europe has reached us. Prominent among those waiting to receive him was Abderrahman Khan, who is represented as looking aged and obese.

KHUDAYAR KHAN.

Of all the states of Central Asia, none has been more unfortunate in modern times than the state of Khokand. It was unfortunate in its internal affairs before the Russians had begun that career of conquest, in and beyond the country of the Kirghiz, which was ultimately to carry their banners in triumph to the banks of the Oxus and the slopes of the Hindoo Koosh. Civil feud and foreign aggression had both left their mark upon the history of a country that was youngest among the independent states of Turkestan. Its borders had expanded or shrunk in accordance with the character of the ruler, and although independence had generally been the right of the hardy hillmen of

Khokand, Namangan, and Andijan, it had sometimes happened that even a wise ruler had been unable to maintain those positions on the Syr Darya, which gave him a secure frontier towards Bokhara, and which sufficed to maintain his reputation sufficiently to enable him to rejoice in his rights as suzerain over the people of Karategin, Shahr-i-sebz, and Kitab. With the rulers of Khiva and Bokhara, the Russians had not been too proud in times past to maintain an intercourse, which might have justified the belief in their eyes that they were the equals of the Czar, but with Khokand there had been no such condescension. When General Peroffsky found his victorious campaigns over the Kirghiz consummated, but had, through untoward circumstances, to leave the crowning of his successes to those who came after him, Russia was brought face to face with the new power of Khokand, whose political existence had been scarcely less brief or uncertain than its military fame. The career of the man whose name is placed at the head of this memoir, includes all this period, which comprises the old and the new in Central Asian history, the time

when Russia was not a Central Asian power at all, and also that when her word was supreme in all things. It is quite true that, so far as practical politics are concerned, Khudayar Khan's influence has passed away, but his reign, as embracing a longer period than that of any other ruler in Central Asia, is well worth attention. A sketch of it will certainly repay perusal.

For some years—those critical ones which witnessed the first appearance in the Khanates of British officers—Khokand enjoyed the rule of a wise and astute prince, Mahomed Ali Khan, not less renowned for his skill in war than his beneficence in peace.

In the year 1842 Mahomed Ali was taken prisoner in war and executed by his bitter foe Nasrullah of Bokhara. In the confusion which broke out after his death, his cousin, Shere Ali Khan, was proclaimed ruler; and he in turn was succeeded by his younger son Khudayar. The real arbiter of the state was, however, the minister Mussulman Kuli, a Kipchak chief. During ten years Khudayar tranquilly ruled the country, mainly through the ability of his

minister; but in 1853, the same year that witnessed the appearance of Izzet Kutebar, the Kirghiz chief, the Khan, chafing—as jealous despots often chafe at the restraints imposed upon their caprices by their wisest advisers—at his Vizier's expostulations, intrigued against him. He even availed himself of the feud between Kipchak and Kirghiz to crush more effectually the man to whom he owed his throne. Mussulman Kuli was murdered by his order.

From that year things in Khokand went from bad to worse. There were fresh intrigues, under the guidance of another chief, Alim Kuli, who on several occasions drove Khudayar into exile. The only one to survive these constant changes in the person of the ruler of the state, these palace brawls, and this civil strife, was Khudayar himself. Finally, however, the death of Mussulman Kuli, and the outbreak of the strife for which that event was the signal, marked the crisis in the fate of Khokand. Those occurrences paved the way for an easy Russian triumph, and for the incorporation of the Khanate in the Russian empire.

The Russians followed up their successes over the Kirghiz by making a direct attack upon the territory of Khokand. They attacked and took in the year 1859 the Khokandian fortress of Chulak Kurgan, eighty miles south-east of Fort Peroffsky, and two years later on they also seized Yany Kurgan, fifty miles nearer Khokand. After another interval of the same length an advance was made on a larger scale against the town of Turkestan, near the Syr Darya, and also against Auliata in the Kirghiz country north of the Kara Tau mountains. Both of these operations had to be postponed until the following year on account of the outbreak of the rising in Poland. In 1864, however, they were carried out with complete success, and the two towns mentioned fell into the possession of the Russians, while the intermediate country with its line of forts shared the same fate. This was the first important success of the Russians in Central Asia. They had remained inactive during ten years; they were now to reap the full benefit of the preparations they had been so diligently preparing. The credit of these successes belongs to General

Tchernaieff, who completed the task which Peroffsky had commenced. The eventful campaign of 1864 did not, however, close with these triumphs.

The town of Tchimkent, which forms the apex of a triangle of which a line drawn from the city of Turkestan to Auliata would be the base, was the next defence of Khokand on the north; and no effort was spared in making it as strong as circumstances would permit. A garrison of ten thousand men was left in it, and it was also fairly provided with artillery. Tchernaieff, recognising the importance of this place, and the danger which might arise from the presence of so large a hostile force in his neighbourhood, resolved to attack it, and, if possible, seize it by a *coup de main*. He delivered his attack with remarkable skill and boldness, and despite the courage of the garrison, who fought with great determination, and were skilfully handled during the earlier part of the day, the town and fortress were carried at, what may be called, a rush.

The Khokandians did not succumb under the intelligence that Tchimkent had fallen. Their

national existence was at stake. They resolved to defend it manfully. The fortifications of Tashkent were repaired. A large army was hurriedly collected and pushed forward to that town, and the regent Alim Kuli and his lieutenants took every precaution in their power to avert an overthrow. Again Tchernaieff thought there was prudence in audacity, and that by dealing an equally prompt blow against Tashkent he might fare as successfully as he had done at Tchimkent. According to one version, the one adopted by Mr. Schuyler, he delivered an assault upon the city, which was repulsed with serious loss to the Russians—sixteen men killed and sixty-two wounded. The Khokandian troops, under the late Yakoob Beg of Kashgar, attempted to follow up their success, but were checked at the village of Ikan by the valour of a small detachment of Cossacks. Here, again, the Russians lost severely, and the Cossacks narrowly escaped annihilation. Another version merely says that there was a battle in the open field between the Khokandians and the Russians, in which the latter were victorious, but with such heavy loss that they were compelled

to retreat. This version is derived from native Khokandian sources, and is given by Dr. Bellew in his historical portion of the "Report on Mission to Kashgar." In either case the Russian design against Tashkent failed, and Tchimkent for some months longer remained the most advanced post of Russia towards the south.

At this crisis of their fate the internal feuds in the country, and the encroachments of their old rival Bokhara, still further detracted from the vigour of the resistance of the Khokandians. While Bokhara was wresting the town of Khodjent from the Khokandians in the south, Tchernaieff was tightening his hold upon Tashkent in the north. In April 1865, having cut off its principal water-supply from the Cherchik river, he entered into intrigues with a party of the citizens, who had little sympathy for the government forced upon them by Alim Kuli. Early in the month of May Alim Kuli arrived in person with reinforcements, and a battle was fought outside the walls, in which, of course, Tchernaieff came off victorious. There is another discrepancy of authorities on this point, but it seems probable that Alim Kuli attacked

the Russian camp on the 21st of May, and, although at one moment fortune appeared adverse to the Muscovites, the attack was repulsed on all points. The victory itself derived most of its importance from the death of Alim Kuli, for he was the last defender of the country. Khudayar had played a very secondary part in all these troubles.

The further conquests which Russia made on Khokandian soil were snatched rather from Bokhara than from Khokand. With the capture of Khodjent in 1866 there followed a peace of nine years' duration between Khokand and the Russian generals. The rebellion which broke out in that Khanate in the winter of 1875, under the auspices of Abderrahman Aftobatcha, son of Mussulman Kuli, against the authority of Khudayar, afforded General Kaufmann the excuse for the absorption of the remaining portion of the Khanate for which he had long been seeking. The independence of Khokand completely disappeared in April 1876, when it was changed into the Russian province of Ferghana.

Khudayar Khan became a Russian pen-

sioner, and for some time resided at Orenburg, where he occupied his time and turned his money to good account by engaging in business as a horse-dealer. At last, pining for liberty, he fled in December 1877 to the steppe, and took refuge in Afghanistan, whence it was recently reported he had made his way into India. It is impossible yet to say whether he has seen the last of his strange vicissitudes. He was an independent ruler before the Russians had reached the Jaxartes and their task of Central Asian conquest had begun. He alone among the eminent of his compatriots has survived four or five civil wars, which aimed at his destruction above every other object, and the old feuds of Kirghiz and Kipchak have become a mere tradition. He has escaped assassination and death at the hands of open and concealed enemies when every other member of his house has been less fortunate; and although neither he nor any other Khan can hope to witness the fall of Russia's power, he may yet live long enough to see its curtailment.

Of his personal character it is impossible to say much in his favour. In his early days

he was a confirmed debauchee, and in his later he became a tyrant. He appears also to have been singularly deficient in judgment, and never to have profited by experience. He was certainly one of those whose conduct served to bring the native Khans of Central Asia so much into disrepute in this country. Compared with the aspirations of the bold people of Khokand, who are essentially the most freedom-loving of the populations of Turkestan, the figure of their ruler must appear to be slight and insignificant, but its actual importance is sufficiently obvious to justify this brief sketch.

ABDERRAHMAN AFTOBATCHA.

AMONG the most prominent of the minor characters, who have stood forth within the last ten years on the platform of Central Asian affairs, must be placed Abderrahman Hadji, Aftobatcha, or ewer-bearer, at the court of Khudayar of Khokand. It is only four years since he headed the most desperate effort that has yet been made to free Central Asia from the thrall of Russia. For a brief space he figured as the champion of national liberties, and it was his energy which rendered the conquest of Ferghana one of the most arduous campaigns upon which Russia has up to the present time embarked.

Abderrahman was the son of Mussulman

Kuli, the Kipchak chief and minister, who was mainly instrumental in placing Khudayar on the throne. During his earlier days he was the sworn companion of that prince, and stories are told of how he begged money for the young Khan from his father, who was afraid to trust him with any lest he should set up a rival party to his own. This boyish friendship between Khudayar and his courtier long continued, and the connection was rendered the closer by the marriage of the Aftobatcha to the Khan's sister. After the murder of Mussulman Kuli in 1853, the same relations were maintained between his son and the ruler as of yore, and shortly after the close of the first war with Russia Abderrahman proceeded on a confidential mission to Constantinople. It was formally announced that he had only gone on pilgrimage to Mecca, but the people refused to believe this, and it was generally supposed that Khudayar had freed himself from the presence of the son in the same way that he had already got rid of the father. In the year 1873 the Khan was obliged by his internal necessities to increase the taxes raised from the Kara Kir-

ghiz, but the nomads resented the decision of the Khokandian authorities. They maltreated the tax collectors, and when troops were sent against them they retired into their mountain fastnesses. At this moment, when a Kirghiz war increased the Khan's other difficulties, Abderrahman Aftobatcha suddenly returned. He was received with an effusion of popular joy that may be attributed to the remembrance of the good services which his father had rendered. The public mind was in a disturbed state, for the expedition against Khiva had commenced; and the little confidence felt in Khudayar's ability added to the enthusiasm of the popular greeting accorded to Abderrahman.

Khudayar at once appointed him to the command of the force which had been ordered against the Kirghiz, but the Khan's treachery defeated both the wise policy and the skilful measures of his lieutenant. A deputation from the Kirghiz proceeded to the town of Khokand with the object of coming to an understanding about the difficulty that had arisen, but no sooner had it arrived than all its members were executed. This wanton breach of faith added

fuel to the flame, and the Kirghiz combining in all directions, compelled the Khan's forces to retire into the plains. So great was the unpopularity of Khudayar at this time, that many Kipchaks joined the Kirghiz, and the troubles assumed all the proportions of a civil war. Abderrahman was the only prominent personage who remained true to Khudayar, and after doing all in the power of a good soldier to retard the advance of the insurgents, he shut himself up in a small fort near the town of Namangan. Winter put an end to military operations, and the contest was deferred until the following year, 1874.

During the winter months a plot was formed for the deposition of Khudayar, and the elevation of his second son to the throne. It failed, however, and only a few petty disturbances marked the year 1874. This comparative lull did but preface greater troubles in the following year. Up to this point Abderrahman had remained faithful in his support of Khudayar; but now, either disgusted with the weakness and treachery of that prince, or actuated, as Mr. Schuyler seems inclined to infer,

by a desire to avenge his father's death, he, too, abandoned his allegiance to the Khan, and put himself at the head of the rebels. They hailed his arrival in their camp with acclamations, and Khùdayar, deserted by his army, fled for safety into Russian territory. This resolution was come to at a moment when a Russian mission, consisting of Colonel Scobeleff and the late M. Weinberg, was resident in his capital; but it was only carried out after great dangers had been incurred in the flight from Khokand to Khodjent. The Khan's eldest son Nasreddin was appointed his successor, but all real power was vested in the hands of Abderrahman Aftobatcha.

It is difficult to arrive at a definite opinion with respect to Abderrahman's policy. He, probably, thought that in aggression lay the surest means of consolidating what he had obtained possession of. It was not enough in his eyes to have cast out the Khan. In order to ensure the stability of his success, it had to be followed up by an attitude of proclaimed hostility to, if not of open war against, the Russians, who had been identified by the people, whether rightly

or wrongly, with the cause of Khudayar. At first the new Khan made friendly overtures to the Russian authorities, and General Kaufmann promised to recognise Nasreddin, who was considered to hold Russian sympathies, on the condition that he would adhere to the treaties already concluded between the two countries. It is not known whether the amicable expressions of the Russians awoke a sympathetic echo in the bosom of Nasreddin; but these views did not chime in with the intentions of the bolder spirits of the party at that moment supreme in Khokand. Disturbances took place along the border, and a general proclamation went forth calling upon all true Mussulmans to rise against the Muscovites. A remarkable document was drawn up, and presented to the Czar's officials, calling upon them either to become Mussulmans, or to abandon the territory they had wrongfully acquired. These events, of course, resulted in a declaration of war.

The leading idea of Abderrahman's plan was by making a bold display to attract to his standard all the disaffected among the subjects

of the Czar in Turkestan. He also hoped to obtain direct assistance from the Ameer of Bokhara, and there are good reasons for believing that he had obtained a distinct promise from Yakoob Beg, who at the time was himself threatened by a large Russian force concentrated in close proximity to his northern frontier. The Khokandians, therefore, boldly crossed the frontier. Much alarm naturally prevailed, and considerable panic manifested itself, even in Tashkent itself. It was said that on a certain day the population of the native town would rise, and that an attempt would be made to massacre every Russian in the country. These exaggerated terrors appear, regarded by the light of subsequent events, to have been absurd; but at the time they were not without foundation. The energy of General Golovatcheff and of Colonel Scobeleff served to allay the prevailing anxiety. The danger did not, however, pass away without leaving several tokens of its existence behind. Post-houses were burnt down, telegraph wires cut, and several officers surprised and murdered on the high-roads.

The greatest peril, however, lay not in the

neighbourhood of Tashkent, but at Khodjent, to the capture of which place Abderrahman devoted his chief efforts. He had evidently decided on this move with the object of influencing the action of Bokhara. From the night of the 20th until the 23rd of August, the Russians were engaged in defending their post, and it is doubtful if they would have succeeded had they not been joined by the garrison of Ura-tepeh, which had surrendered to the Khokandians. On the last of those days the Russians assumed the offensive, and defeated the Khokandians in the open. Reinforcements arrived from Tashkent a short time afterwards, and all danger vanished as quickly as it had arisen. On the 1st of September a movable column under the command of Golovatcheff and Scobeleff, and accompanied by General Kaufmann in person, numbering nearly five thousand men, left Khodjent for the purpose of carrying the war into the enemy's country. It was understood that Abderrahman's forces had taken up a position at Makhram, a small fortified place on the road to Khokand. Considerable skill had been shown in improving the defences of the

place, and the surrounding country had been flooded by the diversion of the canals used for the purposes of irrigation. Despite these preparations, the resistance offered by the Khokandians proved very faint-hearted once the Russians had turned their position by a skilfully executed flanking movement. The army of the Aftobatcha melted away at the slightest collision with the Russian troops, only, however, to collect again as soon as a safe distance intervened between it and the advancing enemy. The effect of this success, though not so great as was represented by the "Tashkent Gazette," was very considerable; and added to a proclamation that the obnoxious Khan Khudayar would not be restored, had the beneficial result of inducing a large number of the people to return to their homes. A week after the battle of Makhram, Khokand fell into the hands of General Kaufmann, and the young Khan Nasreddin, if not a prisoner, was placed at least under the closest surveillance.

But if Nasreddin was in his hands, Abderrahman was at large, and it became necessary for

General Kaufmann to take prompt measures against him, as he was busily occupied in raising up fresh elements of hostility in the eastern districts of the country. At this period the subject of our sketch showed that he possessed great capacity as a partizan leader. Partly by compulsion and partly by persuasion, he brought the authorities of Margilan, Andijan, and other large towns round to his way of thinking; and at Margilan, a town due east of Khokand, Abderrahman intended making a final resistance, but his followers again disbanded on the approach of the Russians. The town surrendered, and the pursuit of Abderrahman was entrusted to Colonel Scobeleff, who pressed it with remarkable vigour. Several towns surrendered, but the principal leader made good his escape. Attended by a small band of faithful Kipchaks, he still roamed the hills of Ferghana, cutting off detached parties, and refusing to recognise the triumph of the Russians.

So far, however, as organised resistance on the part of the people of Khokand went, it had all been overcome, and General Kaufmann was

at liberty to conclude a treaty of peace with Nasreddin. As this treaty, although drawn up, and requiring the cession of Namangan to Russia, was practically inoperative, it is unnecessary to consider it here. In the meanwhile Abderrahman had again succeeded in gathering a force around him, and had taken up a strong position at Andijan, where another Khan had been set up as a ruler in the land. A strong force was sent against this place under General Troitzky, one of Kaufmann's favourite officers, who after overcoming the most desperate resistance offered during the campaign, inflicted a defeat upon the enemy, and destroyed the greater part of the town. But although checked, the enemy was far from being dispersed. In fact he was bolder than ever, and, when General Troitzky withdrew to Namangan, followed him up with unusual audacity. The Russians seemed unwilling to admit the partial nature of their success, and General Kaufmann evidently persuaded that the chief portion of his task was accomplished, forthwith returned to Khodjent. Scarcely had he left Margilan before the puppet ruler Nasreddin was deposed,

and compelled to take refuge in Russian territory. The few advantages obtained by a treaty that had not yet been ratified were lost before they had come into effect. The task which it was thought had been carried out so well and successfully had to be recommenced from the beginning, and the troops in the act of returning to their positions were ordered back to the territory recently occupied.

The whole of Khokand burst into a flame. Scobeleff obtained decided successes at Namangan, Balyktchi, Paita, and Sarkhaba. He ravaged the country of the Kipchaks round the Kara Darya, and obtained a "crowning victory" at Andijan in January 1876. He inflicted another defeat on Abderrahman in person at Assake, in consequence of which the Kipchak chief surrendered. With the surrender of the man who had alone given life to the cause, all resistance ceased. Nasreddin was deposed and became a Russian pensioner, other royal pretenders were executed, Abderrahman being placed in honourable confinement. Khokand became the Russian province of Ferghana, and thus was the historic name

revived of the country which had been the home of the wisest and most moderate of the conquerors of India.

It is not easy to grasp the individuality of Abderrahman by means of the extremely meagre evidence which we possess. All we know of him, and indeed it is all that is of any practical importance, has been here narrated. Alone among Central Asiatics he offered a continuous resistance during nearly six months to Russian soldiers. So far as it is possible to judge, the springs of his conduct were love of country, and the legitimate pride of a martial race. He has many claims to be considered a sincere patriot, and he has certainly afforded an example which other Asiatics should not be slow to imitate if they still preserve that desire for independence, which is the first and only true token of patriotism.

MOZAFFUR EDDIN.

A RULER of Bokhara occupies by right of birth a high position in the eyes of Central Asiatics. Not only is he held to be a great temporal chief, but he is also the spiritual head of the Mahomedans of either Turkestan. Shorn as he has been of many of his most cherished possessions by Russian violence, and with the prospect of recovering them growing more and more visionary every day, it is true that a Bokharan ruler can find little consolation in the circumstances under which he holds the small amount of power that may still be his. It is a task scarcely less thankless than difficult for him to restrain the various impulses

which are constantly rising up and urging him to head the fanaticism of his people in a great struggle with the Russians. Each day that passes away finds these expiring elements of patriotism and fanaticism becoming weaker and weaker, and the Bokharan prince left more and more at his own inclination to follow that safe policy which he adopted after the campaign that closed with the annexation of Samarcand. The remembrance of the former greatness of Bokhara is becoming a tradition; and it may be confidently expected that this process of natural decay will continue until it has passed away from the public mind, unless some exterior influence should be introduced, by a complication in the Central Asian Question, to quicken the "still" life of these gradually expiring rulers.

Mozaffur Eddin Khan succeeded his father Nasrullah as Ameer of Bokhara in the year 1860. The earlier events of his reign comprised chiefly his relations with his neighbours of Khokand. He was apparently desirous of emulating the achievements of his father, who had not only over-run Khokand, but had cap-

tured and beheaded its Khan. Although his own authority was not as widely recognised as a strong ruler would have desired, he set himself up as the arbiter of all questions connected with Turkestan. He had designs on Balkh, whence Dost Mahomed had expelled him; he looked with a coveting eye towards Merv, which had once been won by a Bokharan ruler; and he boldly set himself up as the judge on all questions of dispute in the internal affairs of Tashkent and Khokand. For a few years he was able to play with some dignity and effect the part to which he aspired. But in 1864 the situation underwent a complete change. He, who aimed at playing in Central Asia the part that Louis XI. had played in France, and who affected to regard Khiva and Khokand as that monarch did Burgundy and Brittany, saw the prey which he held as peculiarly his due slipping from his grasp. The Russians had in that year entered Turkestan, and were laying close siege to Tashkent. If the game was not to be lost, that event compelled him to bestir himself.

General Tchernaieff, by a prompt advance

upon the Syr Darya and by the capture of the ferry at Chinaz, averted for a moment the danger from Bokharan intervention. But after Tashkent had surrendered, this Russian success did not prevent the Ameer unveiling his hostility. An embassy, composed of Messrs. Struve, son of the distinguished astronomer, Tatarinof, and Glukhoffsky, and other officers, was sent by Russia to Bokhara, with the intention of discovering what were the Ameer's true feelings towards Russia. His reply was terse and emphatic; he cast several of the envoys into prison. Before Khokand, therefore, was more than half conquered, Russia's relations with Bokhara had changed from those of friendship to declared hostility.

In January 1866 Tchernaieff crossed the Syr Darya, and advanced from Chinaz upon Jizakh. But his force was very weak, and he found Jizakh to be stronger than he had expected, and that the Ameer had assembled a considerable army for the defence of his dominions. Mozaffur pretended, notwithstanding, to be disposed to yield to the Russian demands, a pretence Tchernaieff, either feigning or being weak enough

to credit, seized as an excuse for retreating, and abandoned the Russian envoys to their fate.

When Mozaffur interfered, in 1864, in the affairs of Khokand, and placed Khudayar, for a second or a third time, upon the throne, he retained possession of the important town of Khodjent, on the banks of the Syr Darya. The Russians coveted this highly important position, and were little disposed to recognise Bokhara's claim over a town which was clearly Khokandian, and to which they looked as part of the spoils of war. General Tchernaieff was replaced by General Romanoffsky, in consequence of the retreat from Jizakh, and it became his successor's immediate task to repair that disaster, and effectually to curb the hostile attitude of Bokhara. In April 1866 Romanoffsky moved down upon Khodjent, after having collected at Chinaz a large supply of provisions, etc., which had been sent up the river by water from Kazala. In that month he routed a considerable body of Bokharan cavalry, and in May advanced across the Syr Darya to encounter the main army of the Ameer.

The two armies came face to face on the

plain of Irjar on the 20th of May, and a battle immediately commenced. The Russian army numbered four thousand men and twenty guns. The Bokharan is computed to have mustered forty thousand men, with twenty-one guns; but of these barely five thousand were regular Bokharan troops. Such confidence did he feel at this time in the valour and efficiency of his army, that the Ameer had previously announced his intention of retaking Tashkent! The battle began by a skirmish with the swarms of irregular cavalry that covered the front of the Bokharan intrenchments. These were slowly but completely driven in upon the main body. For some time after this advantage the battle raged furiously, and several of the intrenchments had to be carried at the point of the bayonet. The arrival of a fresh Russian detachment with artillery on the opposite bank of the river proved the decisive turning-point in the day; and after that incident the Bokharan army broke and fled in all directions. The Ameer, who was present, retired with a small detachment to Jizakh, leaving in the hands of the Russians

his artillery, his treasure, and untold stores of warlike munitions and provisions. No official statement was published of the loss on either side; but it has been computed that the Bokharans lost over one thousand men—a total which seems moderate considering the bitterness of the fight—and that the Russians suffered a loss of only twenty or thirty wounded. But although the price paid for this victory is not exactly known, its results were so great and so important that it would not have been dearly purchased at a much more serious cost. The prestige of Bokhara was annihilated, and Russia, secure in her own strength, became doubly secure through the panic that unnerved all Asiatics after the signal overthrow at Irjar. The practical results of the battle were immediate, and the most important being the capture of the fortress of Nau, which stands half-way between Khodjent and Ura-tepeh. An advance was then made upon Khodjent, and on the 29th of May this city was surrounded and attacked from two sides. It surrendered at discretion after a heavy bombardment of five days, the Russians admitting a loss of

eleven killed and one hundred and twenty-two wounded.

After his defeat at Irjar, Mozaffur sent back the Russian envoys to Tashkent laden with presents. But the Ameer did not yet give up the game as lost. He had been beaten in the field, several of his fortresses had been wrested from him, but there still remained to the reputed head of Islam in Central Asia other armies and other fortresses wherewith to carry on a war. After the fall of Khodjent a truce of some months' duration ensued, but in the early winter of the same year the attitude of Bokhara was held to be so equivocal that a further advance was determined upon as necessary. Ura-tepeh and Jizakh were the two principal outposts remaining to the Ameer after Chinaz and Khodjent had been wrested from him. They each guarded a road to Samarcand, the former, one from the east, and the latter, one from the north-east. The Russians closely besieged Ura-tepeh on the 6th of October, and on the 14th it fell into their hands. The greater part of the garrison appears to have escaped, and the Russians

suffered a loss of two hundred killed and wounded, according to their own admission.

Almost on the same day Jizakh shared the same fate, being carried by assault, after a short bombardment, despite its natural strength and the number of its garrison. The latter fought bravely—particularly its leaders, who were nearly all killed on the walls—but apparently with little skill. The result of these triumphs, complete, and obtained with little loss, was that Bokhara saw itself compelled to sue for peace. Mozaffur Eddin himself recognised the impossibility of continuing the struggle alone.

He made overtures at this time to the Ameer of Aghanistan for an alliance, and as affairs happened to be in a very troubled state in Cabul, he entered into particularly close relations with Faiz Mahomed Khan, Governor of Balkh and one of the sons of Dost Mahomed. He even made propositions to our Government, which politely snubbed him; but although he could find no allies in his extremity, the turbulence and fanaticism of his people urged him to again draw the sword which had been scarcely sheathed.

After the fall of Jizakh the Russian generals, who had been continually reprimanded for their activity, took so sanguine a view of the condition of things in Turkestan that the following official announcement was sent home. "Perfect tranquillity reigns throughout the country of Turkestan. The war with Bokhara, as far as regards Russia, is at an end. The Governor-General (Orenburg) hopes for a long continuance of tranquillity, provided the Ameer of Bokhara abstains from a renewal of hostilities. Amicable relations with Khokand are confirmed, and commerce is everywhere re-established. Many caravans come from Bokhara, and go thither. Even the West Siberian corps, ordered to the territory of Turkestan, returns home again." But notwithstanding this lull in the strife, it was uncertain how long it would continue. Six months after the capture of Jizakh the "Invalide Russe" declared that Russia had entertained no negotiations or diplomatic relations with the Ameer Mozaffur.

In September 1867 Kaufmann became Governor-General of the newly-constituted pro-

vince of Turkestan, and he at once pursued the negotiation of a treaty which had been drawn up by his predecessor, General Krjihanoffsky. The draft of this treaty was sent to the Ameer for approval, but instead of replying to the proposals made to him he began to discuss other matters and to correspond with Kaufmann upon various minor topics. Mozaffur's procrastination assumed a still more dubious aspect when he refused to surrender a Russian officer and three soldiers who had been carried off by robbers on the Jizakh road. The officer—Slushenko by name—was tortured and compelled to adopt the Mahomedan religion. The immediate consequence of that act was that Kaufmann began to mass troops for an advance on Samarcand, and the Ameer to raise levies from amongst his subjects.

Unfortunately for the latter, he no longer ruled a united people. His internal foes were not less formidable to him than his external. If his own inclinations alone had been consulted, it is probable that he would not have gone to war with Russia under any pretext whatever. He had already tasted enough of the pleasures of

such warfare. But he was no longer a free agent. The *ulemas* of Bokhara and Samarcand were urging him on to resume the "holy war." His eldest son, Katti Torah, was intriguing against his authority, while his nephew, Seyyid Khan, stood in open defiance at Shahr-i-sebz. The latter soon obtained the position of an independent prince, but Shahr-i-sebz, having cast off the Bokharan yoke, recognised the leadership of its own chief known as Jura Beg. It was at such a moment as this, with Bokhara like unto a house divided against itself, that Mozaffur had to enter upon his third and final war with the Russians.

Colonel Abramoff, as commandant of Jizakh, took the first step towards punishing the assailants of Lieutenant Slushenko by making an attack upon the village of the robbers. In the meanwhile Mozaffur had been deserted by the Afghan prince, Iskander Khan, a son of Sultan Jan of Herat, who went over to the Russians; yet unable to resist the demands of his people, he declared a "holy war" against Russia. General Kaufmann, who was said to be on the eve

of setting out for St. Petersburg, but who had previously, a fact well known, sent a letter to the Kazi Kalian of Samarcand, demanding the surrender of that city, thereupon ordered an advance to be made into Bokharan territory. This was decided upon early in the month of May 1868, and on the 13th the first brush with the Bokharan army took place on the hill of Tchupan-ata, on the banks of the Zerafshan river. It resulted in an easy triumph for the Russians, who crossed the river in the face of a heavy fire and drove the enemy out of their intrenchments. The surrender of Samarcand quickly followed this success, for the inhabitants shut their gates of their own accord upon the Bokharan army, and voluntarily welcomed the Russians. After the surrender of Samarcand desultory fighting took place between the Russian army and the irregulars from Shahr-i-sebz and other cities. In these encounters the Russians were uniformly victorious, but to resist the attacks necessitated a scattering of their forces, which gave new confidence to the Ameer.

He was collecting a fresh army near Katti

Kurgan, a town forty miles west of Samarcand, which had been garrisoned with a small force by General Golovatcheff; and his cavalry had already cut the Russian general's communications with Jizakh and Tashkent. The neighbourhood of Samarcand also swarmed with armed men, who, if not very formidable in the line of battle, were certainly much to be feared in more irregular warfare. A large body of cavalry—said to number fifteen thousand men—was at Chelik threatening Yany Kurgan and even Jizakh, and wherever General Kaufmann turned he found a foe to be encountered whom it was most difficult to reach. In this emergency General Kaufmann thought his best plan to be an advance to the relief of Katti Kurgan, but the moment he left Samarcand the Shahr-i-sebz army attacked it; and although Major Stempel and the small garrison defended the citadel with the greatest heroism, it narrowly escaped capture. In fact, nothing saved it from surrender but the withdrawal of the troops from Shahr-i-sebz under their leader Jura Beg, who was misled by a report that Kaufmann was returning.

In the meanwhile Kaufmann had relieved the garrison of Katti Kurgan and defeated the army of the Ameer in a pitched battle at Zera-bulak. It was only several days after the attack upon Samarcand that Kaufmann heard of what was taking place in his rear, and he hurried back with all despatch to rescue the much-reduced garrison. Mozaffur Eddin then made an unconditional surrender, and had the Russian Government granted Kaufmann full powers on this point, he would have annexed the whole of the Khanate. The annexation of Samarcand was in itself a triumph with which any governor-general might have rested content, and the practical results of this 1868 campaign were so great as to be scarcely realisable at the time. Mozaffur Eddin was permitted to retain his personal authority, and received assistance in putting down the seditious movement which his son, Katti Torah, and several other chiefs raised up against him. These were all repressed, and in 1869 Katti Torah became a fugitive, and his father's authority more firmly established within the territory that remained to him than it had been during the three pre-

vious years. His feelings towards the Russians became less inimical after they had occupied in his name the town of Karshi, and then restored it to him. Encouraged by this and similar friendly acts, a younger son of the Ameer, Jan Torah, went on an embassy to St. Petersburg, where he stayed for some time. One of the principal objects his mission had to obtain was the restoration of Samarcand, but his diplomacy in this direction, it is scarcely necessary to say, completely failed.

With the annexation of Samarcand the misunderstandings between Tashkent and Bokhara terminated. Since that year, if we except the clouds which appeared upon the horizon during the progress of the Khivan campaign, the relations of Russia and Bokhara have assumed the cordiality that marked them in the days before the advance of the Muscovites into the country of the Kirghiz. The same Ameer who threatened Russia so nearly when Tchernaieff was besieging Tashkent is now her very good ally. His old dreams of ambition have vanished. He is content with his temporal advantages. The army which he is permitted to

retain numbers some twenty thousand men; but it is of a very nondescript character, and quite unadapted for modern warfare. Mozaffur bears precisely the same relation to Russia that the Khan of Khelat did to us after the signature of the Treaty of 1854. The principal strategical points within his frontier, such as Charjui, may be garrisoned whenever Russia deems fit; and a right of way has been thus obtained up the Oxus.

The present Ameer has no heir to his dominions who would be absolutely pleasing to the Russians, but he has several relations who lay claim to the succession who would be positively displeasing to them. His death may, therefore, be expected to produce the complete dismemberment of the Bokharan state and its incorporation with the government of Turkestan. At the present moment, and under the conditions that obtain, the Bokharan Government has no discretionary power over its acts, and in whatever Russia decides upon it must acquiesce. The people themselves are said to be extremely hostile to Russia, but from what Mr. Schuyler has told us it is clear that this senti-

ment is neither so bitterly inimical, nor so deeply rooted as has been asserted. Mozaffur Eddin does not possess the power to disobey the orders sent from Tashkent, and it is very doubtful whether he feels the inclination.

It must also be remembered that there is no quarter whence the Ameer can expect assistance. He appealed to this country in 1867, and he received neither sympathy nor encouragement. He had previously made overtures to the Cabul Ameer for a defensive alliance against both Russia and England, and he has subsequently to his reconciliation with Russia inveighed against this country in his correspondence with Shere Ali. We have no evidence as to the part he played in the negotiations which led up to the despatch of the Stoletoff mission, but as all the native emissaries from Tashkent came through his country, we may be sure that it was not that of a neutral. The long-standing relations between Cabul and Bokhara, the claims that Bokhara advances over Balkh and the neighbouring districts, forbid the supposition that Mozaffur Eddin would remain an unconcerned spectator of the dismemberment of Cabul.

He may remember the part his father played in the days of Dost Mahomed, and aspire either, to be the protector of the cause of the Baruck-syes, or, if that cause be utterly wrecked, to extend his dominion up to the slopes of the Hindoo Koosh. In either case he would be willing to act as the puppet of the Russians and to play the game they might sketch out for him. His ambition and vanity will urge him to further General Kaufmann's aggressive designs, and his hostility to England, thinly veiled throughout his career, will render any enterprise calculated to injure our interests palatable to him.

Quite recently he has given the clearest token of his Russian sympathies by affording marked facilities to Russian exploring expeditions, and in a still more unequivocal manner by the assembling of troops, and the collection of supplies at Charjui.

Various opinions have been expressed on the subject of Mozaffur's personal character. By one writer he has been described as a mixture of Louis the Eleventh and Heliogabalus. It is affirmed that he punished his subjects with death for the very same acts of immorality

which he himself committed in "the most barefaced manner." If these allegations were true, he probably reconciled the matter with his conscience by the old theory that what was good for the ruler would be very hurtful for the ruled. Vámbéry, formed, however, a much more favourable opinion of his character, and represents him as "a well-intentioned man, very strict, and of irreproachable character as regards his personal conduct." On the other hand, he was generally admitted to be a bigot, and opposed to all reforms that owed their origin in any way to the influence of the unbeliever. He strove for many years to govern his people well according to his lights, and he took as his motto "Govern by Justice." The period during which he treated his chief dignitaries with marked severity represented the most striking portion of his administration. The slightest offence in the royal eyes met with the punishment of death. No doubt it was much owing to this brutal energy against his nobles that his moderation towards his people appeared in the public estimation to be enhanced. It passed at last into a saying, "He destroys the elephants,

but protects the mice"; but Mozaffur forgot that the sources of his strength came from the elephants and not from the mice. As one of the consequences of this mistaken policy, many of his chief vassals fell off from him, so that when the crisis in his contest with Russia arrived, he had to head a divided state against a great national peril. He owes it to Russian assistance that his authority has been preserved in the highlands of his territory, and during the last ten years, as his independence has been becoming more and more a thing of the past, he has had greater opportunity for indulging in the moroseness which formed part of his character. It is probable that he is nothing loth to reconcile himself to the duties of his new position, and to sink the independence of the native ruler in the security of a Russian vassal.*

* A very interesting account of an interview with this prince will be found in Mr. Eugene Schuyler's "Turkistan," vol. ii. p. 82 *et seq.*

GENERAL KOLPAKOFFSKY.

Of all the Russian generals who have won their way to fame in the campaigns which have made Central Asia an appendage of the Czar, none deserves to stand higher than General Kolpakoffsky, at the present time officiating as Governor-General of the province of Semiretchinsk. If the next Governor-General of Turkestan should be selected either for his military attainments or for his intimate acquaintance with the peoples and political circumstances of Central Asia, there can be no doubt that Kaufmann's successor should be the subject of this memoir. Not only does he excel

every other officer in the service in the qualifications specified, but he has literally speaking no rival in them. Nor are these the sole recommendations to render him eligible for the post. He has already exercised supreme power at Tashkent as Kaufmann's deputy on three occasions, and he can therefore plead practical acquaintance with the duties of the post as an additional reason in favour of his being selected to fill it.

Kolpakoffsky was born at Kherson in the year 1819. His father was a subaltern officer in that district. He entered the army as a common soldier in the Lublin infantry regiment at the age of sixteen, and received his commission in 1841, when he was twenty-two years of age. He served for many years in the Caucasus, and took part in the operations in Transylvania against the Hungarians in 1848. In 1852 he went to Siberia, at that time the most promising field in Central Asia for the energy and ability of Russian soldiers, and he has remained there ever since, for Semiretchinsk is quite as much a portion of Siberia as it is of Turkestan. At first he was stationed

at the great penal settlement of Berezof, and during six years little opportunity offered for the display of any exceptional talent.

In 1858 he was transferred to the district of Ala-tau, and with this change his public career may be said to have fairly commenced. Russia was on the eve of commencing her second period of activity in Asia. The solid achievements of Peroffsky had paved the way for brilliant triumphs by more fortunate generals, and Colonel Kolpakoffsky as commandant of the fort at Uzun-Agatch—a place north of Lake Issik Kul and west of Vernoe—was in a favourable position for reaping a fair share in the dangers and prizes that are to be met and won at a time when each annexation is but the prelude to another. In October 1860, when feverish excitement prevailed among the Khokandians at the rumoured preparations on the side of the Russians for a fresh advance, Kolpakoffsky had under his command at the fort above named a force of eight hundred men and six guns. A general league was formed between the Khokandians and the Kirghiz tribes for the purpose of expelling the Russians from the pro-

vince of Semiretchinsk. They intended to sack Vernoe and to lay the Russian forts level with the ground. The best of the Khokandian generals, Khanayat Shah, placing himself at the head of a force computed at thirty thousand men, advanced upon Uzun Agatch, in the full expectation of obtaining a decided triumph. Khanayat Shah entrusted the attack to one of his subordinates, but the Khokandian, either awed by the bold demeanour of the Russians, or being at heart a coward, delivered the assault in a half-hearted manner and was beaten off. Messengers were sent after Kolpakoffsky who happened to be absent at Kastek, where the attack had been expected, telling him of the danger of the garrison. By a forced march he gained the rear of the Khokandian army, and attacking it without hesitation, succeeded in inflicting a severe defeat upon it. Khanayat Shah retreated precipitately into Khokand, and this brilliant victory greatly enhanced the reputation of the Russian soldier. It is impossible to say what disastrous results might have accrued if the Russians had not been successful, and that they were successful was altogether

due to the energy, courage, and skill of Colonel Kolpakoffsky.

Ten years passed away before Kolpakoffsky found another occasion for appearing prominently in public, at the time when the anarchy in Kuldja afforded a pretext for Russian interference. Kolpakoffsky had then become a general, and risen high in the service, holding the same appointment that he does at the present time, viz. Governor-General of the province of Semiretchinsk (the country of the seven rivers). After the expulsion of the Chinese from the region of the Ili by the Tungan-Tarantchi insurgents a period of confusion ensued in the affairs of that once prosperous territory. Despot succeeded to despot, and the inhabitants derived no benefit from the frequent change. As many of them as could do so fled over the border into Russian territory, and were placed in settlements round Vernoe and Kopal. Of these refugees a large proportion was of the Solon tribe, which enjoyed special privileges from the Chinese. Kolpakoffsky took a prominent part in alleviating the distress amongst these exiles, and for his good services in this

respect the Emperor of China conferred upon him "the dignity of Mandarin of the first class, with a robe of honour embroidered with dragons, which, being placed on the same footing with a decoration, he received the special permission of his own Emperor to wear on state occasions."* It is true that in 1870 it appeared as if Abul Oghlan, the actual ruler of Kuldja, was disposed to live on friendly terms with his Russian neighbours, but frontier disputes occurred frequently. These, added to the apprehensions caused by the growing power of Yakoob Beg in Eastern Turkestan, supplied the Russian authorities with an adequate excuse for occupying Kuldja. Orders were issued to the Russian general to carry out the design, and Kolpakoffsky crossed the frontier into the country held by the rebellious subjects of the Emperor of China.

The campaign was of the briefest. On the 28th of June the first encounter took place, on the 3rd of July Abul Oghlan surrendered, and on the

* Schuyler's "Turkistan," vol. ii. p. 184.

4th his capital fell into the hands of the Russians. This almost bloodless campaign marked the year 1871, and the credit for it rested exclusively with Kolpakoffsky. He found himself not able, however, to prevent a barbarous massacre of a large number of Tungani and Chinese by the Tarantchis. In every other respect the operation was carried out with remarkable success, but it did not enjoy great favour at St. Petersburg. The Foreign Office saw clearly that it might entail at some future time a complication with China, and the Russian authorities have always deprecated and striven to avoid such a contingency. They could not in the face of General Kolpakoffsky's decided acts order a withdrawal from the occupied province, but they officially informed the Chinese Government that, whenever it sent a sufficient force, Kuldja should be restored.* Kolpakoffsky received the Cross of St. George, not, however, by the pleasure of the Czar, but by

* A treaty has recently been signed between Russia and China, by the terms of which Kuldja is to be restored to China.

the voluntary decree of the Chapter of the Order.

In 1873, during the Khivan expedition, Kolpakoffsky acted as Kaufmann's deputy at Tashkent, and while holding this post he endeavoured to persuade the St. Petersburg Government to approve of the occupation of Khokand. The moment was particularly auspicious in one sense, and not less inauspicious in another. Had the undertaking been sanctioned, the Russians would probably have encountered little or no opposition, as the Khan was at the moment very unpopular with his subjects. If this had been done, in accordance with Kolpakoffsky's advice, events would have been anticipated by three years, and the bitter campaign of the winter of 1875 might have been avoided. But, on the other hand, the Russians were actively engaged in inflicting punishment upon Khiva, and it was felt to be inadvisable to take the settlement of the fate of Khokand in hand at the same time. Not only was the larger portion of the Russian troops available in Turkestan engaged at a remote spot, but the Russian statesmen had found it sufficiently dif-

ficult to allay the suspicions of England with regard to Khiva without raising fresh ones by acts of aggression in Khokand. For these reasons Kolpakoffsky's suggestion was not acted upon.

In 1875, when the war in Khokand broke out in earnest, Kolpakoffsky was for a second time acting as Kaufmann's deputy, and it became his duty to announce the determination of the Russian Government to annex the remaining portion of that Khanate. As the official proclamation put it, the Czar had been induced to listen to the prayer of the inhabitants to become Russian subjects. Under General Kolpakoffsky's direction the final arrangements were made for the administration of the new province of Ferghana, and General Scobelef was appointed its first governor.

In 1873, while the Khivan war was still in progress, Kolpakoffsky entered into direct communication with Shere Ali, and to him belongs much of the credit for having reminded the Ameer in delicate but sufficiently distinct language that Russia was a great Power, and one moreover rapidly drawing

nearer and nearer to the northern frontier of that potentate's dominions. It is asserted that Kolpakoffsky is more amicably disposed towards England than either Kaufmann or any other of the Central Asian generals; but it is difficult to find in his public acts any proof of this confident assertion. When Kaufmann left Tashkent for St. Petersburg in the spring of the year 1879 Kolpakoffsky took his place for a third time as governor-general.

Notwithstanding the intimate practical experience which he has acquired with the working of the supreme administration in Turkestan, it was well known that had Kaufmann's resignation taken place this autumn—as it certainly would have but for the rising at Cabul—Kolpakoffsky would not have been his successor. The prize, for it is now regarded in that light, and not as "a banishment to the outer confines" as it used to be termed, was to be reserved for either Prince Dondoukoff Korsakoff or some other favoured European counsellor. Yet no one has higher claims to the post, and certainly there are few Russian officers who would

fill it with greater advantage to the state, than the Governor of Semiretchinsk.

The remarkable difference between Kolpakoffsky and every other Russian officer of note is that he has always striven to understand the people whom he governs. Not only has he acted upon this principle for the purpose of being the better able to perform his duties, but, if we take the evidence, as we well may, of those who know him best, he has also done this with the laudable object of putting himself in accord with the subject populations. It is sufficient to contrast this conscientious method of performing his duty with the very opposite plan that has been followed by the present Governor-General to show how far superior as a man and a public servant Kolpakoffsky is to Kaufmann. It is true that he is most intimately acquainted with the great Kirghiz people, but he has also devoted close attention to, and played a large part in the direction of, affairs in the other parts of Central Asia.

About the Kirghiz and everything that concerns them there is no one competent to speak

with a tithe of his authority. He has lived among them, he speaks their language, and he is known and trusted by them. His energy, his untiring horsemanship, have earned for him among these primitive people the soubriquet of "the Iron Seat." In addition to all these recommendations, he is a good soldier, an excellent administrator, a practised diplomatist, versed in the secrets of the Chinese, as well as of the Central Asian, policy of the Russian Government. His private virtues are, by all accounts, not less estimable than his public qualities are worthy of laudation. Not only does he eclipse his comrades as a soldier and an administrator, but he is equally pre-eminent for the purity of his life and the spotlessness of his honour.

GENERAL TCHERNAIEFF.

ALTHOUGH many years have elapsed since Tchernaieff played an active part in deciding the progress of events in Central Asia, his name is connected with so many of the most remarkable Russian achievements that it would be impossible to ignore his career, even if the marked interest which he has taken in Central Asian matters, since his departure from Turkestan, had not served to keep his name prominently before the Russian people. On his recall Tchernaieff, disappointed of what he considered to be his legitimate prize, constituted himself the critic of the Central Asian administration. With his practical knowledge

of the subject, he has been able to say much of great weight, if it must be allowed that he has also often permitted his personal feelings to get the better of his judgment.

He began his military service in the Guards, served on the Danube in the campaign against the Turks in 1853, and was afterwards one of the defenders of Sebastopol. When the war in the Crimea closed, the Russian Government turned its chief attention to crushing the people of the Caucasus. In those operations Tchernaieff played a considerable part. When the Caucasus was thoroughly pacified he left for Orenburg, where he was appointed Chief of the Staff to Katenin, Peroffsky's successor. He had the good fortune to arrive at a critical, and also a most opportune moment. Russia was about to resume her operations on the Syr Darya.

Tchernaieff — at the time a colonel — was placed at the head of two thousand five hundred men, and Colonel Verefkin—an able officer who played a prominent part in the attack on Khiva in 1873—had the command of another force about half the strength. This occurred in the

year 1864. The ostensible object before these officers was to establish a fortified line of communication between Orenburg and Western Siberia. They practically accomplished it in June of that year, when Auliata and the town of Turkestan were captured. The more important city of Tchimkent, which lies at the southern apex of the triangle and equi-distant from those places, fell into his hands in October. The place was carried by assault, almost at a rush; and its fall caused a great panic throughout the Khanate of Khokand, for it was the strongest fort on the north, and the Russians had taken it without any apparent difficulty. The fate of the rest of Khokand might be inferred from the fall of Tchimkent.

Flushed with his success, Tchernaieff followed up this advantage by marching on Tashkent. He thought it one of those occasions when boldness became prudence, but he was mistaken in his surmise. On the 15th of October he erected a battery in front of the walls of Tashkent, and after a short bombardment the engineers declared the breach to be practicable.

The assault was delivered, but the Khokandians repulsed it, inflicting upon the Russians a loss of sixteen killed and sixty-two wounded. Tchernaieff felt himself obliged to retreat to Tchimkent, and the Khokandians did not leave him undisturbed throughout the ensuing winter. The recapture of Turkestan represented the main object before Alim Kuli, the Regent, who failed to realise his object. A graphic incident in this winter campaign was the defence of Ikan by a small band of Cossacks, who, after losing more than half their number, cut their way through the Khokandian army, and succeeded in reaching Turkestan in safety.

In the spring of the year 1865 Tchernaieff took measures for the renewal of the attack on Tashkent. He began by seizing the small fort of Niazbek, which commanded the water-supply of Tashkent. He then took up a position close to the city, and made reconnaissances in force around the suburbs. The garrison was at this point reinforced by Alim Kuli and a small army, and the Khokandian general, either distrusting the fidelity of the townspeople, or confident in his superior numbers, resolved

upon attacking the Russian camp. The attack was repulsed, although at one moment it almost seemed as if success would have attended it, and Alim Kuli fell in the attempt. With him expired the last of the great king-makers of Central Asia. The city still held out, although each day found the hearts of its defenders growing fainter and fainter. As a precautionary measure Tchernaieff occupied Chinaz and the ferry across the Syr Darya. That move effectually shut out all prospect of help from Bokhara. Partizans from Bokhara succeeded, however, in making their way into the city, and took a prominent part in the later stages of its defence. Tashkent finally surrendered after an assault on the 27th of June, and a vast quantity of spoil fell into the hands of the victors. This result was most creditable to Tchernaieff, for he had captured, with only two thousand men and twelve guns, a large and strongly fortified place held by thirty thousand men with more than sixty guns.

But if his military dispositions reflected credit upon him as a general, his arrangements with the local authorities after the sur

render of the town were certainly not less admirable. His simple habits appeared not less prominent than his courage. On the very evening of the formal surrender he rode through the streets attended by a few Cossacks. He attracted general sympathy by taking a native bath. We are told that no sooner had he finished his ablutions than one of the crowd offered him a bowl of tea, which he accepted without any signs of hesitation. It was by such conduct as these incidents are a sample of, that Tchernaieff endeared himself more than any other Russian officer to the people of the Khanates, and he is still known amongst them as Shir Naib, the Lion Viceroy.

In the campaign which ensued with Bokhara after the fall of Tashkent, Tchernaieff's preliminary operations were not attended with good fortune. He sent envoys to Bokhara, who were cast into prison. He marched a certain distance into Bokharan territory, and then, deceived by the specious representations of the Ameer, he retreated. He showed himself too trustful in his dealings with a deceitful court, and he had in consequence to accept the

responsibility for a check, which his enemies magnified into a reverse. He was recalled from Central Asia, and replaced by Romanoffsky, the victor of Irjar.

On his return to Europe he left the army and established himself in Moscow as a notary. In November 1867 he passed the necessary examination, and it is asserted on good authority that a kind-hearted capitalist advanced the caution-money necessary for him to obtain the right to practise as a notary public. In this capacity he does not appear to have been very fortunate, as he was subsequently concerned in several commercial projects, none of which had any remarkable success. At the same time he became connected with the Moscow press, and contributed a series of important articles on the affairs of Central Asia to the columns of the "Russki Mir."

One of the most remarkable of these appeared in that journal on February 2nd (14th) 1875. It was upon the subject of the part the Khan of Khiva had played in the Kirghiz troubles. One of the chief accusations against that ruler had been that he had instigated the

Kirghiz to rebellion. Tchernaieff combated this view, and concluded a pregnant article with the following significant passage.* "When we are quiet, our neighbours are quiet, but as soon as we excite the discontent of our own Kirghiz, some of our neighbours are immediately found to be to blame." But his principal theme has been the financial maladministration of Turkestan. In that he has a subject which he perfectly understands, and one which constitutes the great blot in Kaufmann's system of government. In 1872 he drew up a paper on the subject, which created great sensation, and the Minister of Finance considered it to be of sufficient importance to bring before the Czar. Kaufmann had to exert all his influence at Court to overcome the opposition which was steadily rising against him. He succeeded then, and has since had similar good fortune. There was much truth in Tchernaieff's criticism, although not altogether free from a suspicion of malice, but Kaufmann's

* Schuyler's "Turkistan," vol. ii. p. 331.

position was too secure to be endangered by hostile articles in the press, or by the machinations of discontented place-seekers.

In 1876 Tchernaieff reappeared in public life as commander of the Servian forces. Of this part of his career nothing need here be said. It exercised no influence upon the affairs of Central Asia. The ability he showed in that campaign has not yet been rewarded, but it is understood that the Russian Government holds that he has a strong claim for the service he then rendered. In 1878 it was rumoured that he was to receive a special command in Central Asia in the event of war with England. The war-cloud cleared off, and Tchernaieff remained at St. Petersburg. He may yet, however, reappear on the scene in which he first won his way to fame, and there are few Russian generals who have more solid claims than he has to exercise a high command. He is especially suited for dealing with Asiatics.

NOOR VERDI KHAN.*

Of the Turcomans as a race much has recently been heard. Their victory over the Russians at Geok Tepeh has won for them a wide renown. The working-out and decision of their fate will form the next stage in the Central Asian Question. It is, therefore, most probable that during the next few years we shall be hearing a great deal about this people, and that all authentic sources of information will be

* I am indebted to Major Francis Butler, 9th Regiment, the well-known traveller in, and explorer of, the country of the Turcomans, for kindly imparting to me most of the particulars of the career of this chief, and also of that of the Governor of Koochan.

eagerly inquired for. But if much has been, and if more is likely to be, heard of these primitive clans, it is extraordinary to find how little is known of the individual Turcoman. No book that has yet been published attempts to give a biographical description of any of their chiefs, although these are now called upon to take an active part in a war which must be of the greatest importance, and probably pregnant with the most vital consequences both to England and to Russia. It is, therefore, with the greater satisfaction that I find myself enabled to sketch some portion of the career of one of the most influential and able of the chiefs of the Turcomans.

Noor Verdi Khan of Akhal is described by one personally acquainted with him as the *beau idéal* of a leader of irregular cavalry. His qualities are essentially those which fit him for ruling a people whose instincts lead them, like true children of the desert, to be extreme in all things, with a passionate longing for the excitement of war and the chase, with a not less keen desire for the friendship of others, and an equally bitter hatred towards those who

incur their antipathy. As we expect such a man to be, he is an extreme representative of his class. He possesses the race characteristics in an exaggerated degree. Its virtues and its vices are depicted in his person, with superlative force. There is not a popular sentiment with which he has not the liveliest sympathy; but as a leader of men should do, he sees farther into the future than his followers, and knows better than any what will be the wiser course for the Turcomans to pursue. He is fully impressed with the spirit of the proverb—which does not always hold good—that boldness is prudence, and, as will be seen, he has acted up to his belief in all things. Nadir Kuli became Nadir Shah by demonstrating qualities such as Noor Verdi has shown himself to possess. The latter can hardly hope to emulate the conquests of the greatest of his race, but, although to aspire to the crown of Persia may be forbidden him, he may yet play the part of champion of the independence of all those who still rejoice in the name of Turcomans.

Noor Verdi is at the present time about fifty-five years of age, and his personal appearance is strongly in his favour. He is de-

scribed as being five feet ten inches in height, of imposing presence, and with very handsome features. His long jet-black beard was, two years ago, unstreaked with a trace of silver, and his personal vigour showed no sign of decay or the advance of time. For many years Noor Verdi ruled over the Akhals from his fort at the village of Akhal, and nothing occurred to interfere with the even tenour of his existence. The Akhals could pursue their daily course of life without dread of Russia, and the outside world scarcely knew of their existence. It is true that the northern frontier of Khorasan has for generations been the scene of an internecine war, which rendered it difficult for any, even for those most disposed, to cultivate the arts of peace in the valleys and beyond the ranges of the Kopet and Kuren Daghs. The feuds between the tyrannical governor and his mercenary troops on the one side, and the freedom-loving people on the other, have been handed down from generation to generation. The loam land of the valleys and mountain slopes watered by the Atrek and its affluents, has been enriched with the blood of those who

should have made it prolific with their labour, just as it has been watered by the tears of human grief and suffering. The child has inherited the wrongs of the father, the antipathy of races has been perpetuated. The Persian came, and what was once a smiling paradise was turned into a region which the children of the soil scarce dared to cultivate. He brought in his train the Kurd and the dregs of the Turkish race. He built his forts, and he gave the land at first to successful soldiers, and then to unscrupulous governors to fatten on. Yet, despite all these disadvantages, the Turcomans held their own in the remoter glens and beyond the mountain lines. Their villages were small forts, their cultivated plains were restricted to the vicinity of these forts, their horses, as on the Scotch border in the Middle Ages, stood saddled in their stalls night and day,—yet the Turcomans throve. The Persian grew feebler, the Shah's authority became the shadow of a name, the Kurd governor more independent, and in many cases inclined to show indulgence towards the Turcoman,—the Akhal and the Teke multiplied the more. The prospect of a better

future was beginning to appear over the horizon when the Russian invasion came on the Akhals like a thunder-cloud—but we anticipate the progress of events.

Noor Verdi had soon after his accession to the chieftainship striven to come to terms with the Persians. He perceived that the intermittent yet never-ceasing war was a source of weakness to both sides, and he thought that it would redound more to his credit to arrange the difficulty by an understanding with the neighbouring Persian governor of Koochan than by attempting to do so by force of arms. This governor* had married a relation of Noor Verdi, a lady of remarkable strength of character, and perhaps through her influence, but certainly by some means, the Turcoman chief and the Persian governor came to the arrangement that there was to be peace between them, and that all raids were to cease. This arrangement was strictly adhered to until about six

* For the career of this governor see the following sketch.

years ago. On that particular portion of the Khorasan frontier an unusual tranquillity prevailed for years, and then by an act of treachery on the part of the Persian this brief period of peace was dispelled, and the old state of confusion revived. It came to pass in this wise.

The Governor of Bujnoord, another Persian town on this border lying west of Koochan, had accumulated in his hands a large number of Turcoman prisoners, taken during a succession of raids into Akhal territory. Noor Verdi, following up the policy of amicable arrangement which he had already carried out with the success we have seen in the case of Koochan, made overtures to the Governor of Bujnoord for the redemption of these prisoners.* The preliminaries were agreed upon, and Noor

* It is quite an usual occurrence on the Khorasan frontier for Turcoman prisoners to be bought back by their friends and relations. There is a fixed value set upon them. An ordinary Turcoman fetches sixty tomans, a chief's son more in proportion to his rank. A Turcoman woman sells for five hundred tomans, some as high as a thousand.

Verdi sent a long caravan with horses, sheep, carpets, &c., towards Bujnoord for the purpose of effecting the release of his imprisoned kinsmen. That caravan represented much of the wealth of the small Akhal community. It had taken, no doubt, much labour to collect, and the savings of many a thrifty peasant were willingly expended upon it in order that the greed of a Persian governor might be satisfied. It carried with it the hopes and the longings of families—doomed, alas! to a bitter disappointment.

The tidings of this rich train sped to Koochan. We have seen that the governor of that town had bound himself by an agreement with Noor Verdi Khan neither to molest the Akhals nor to seize their property. But promises sit lightly on the conscience of a governor of the King of Kings. The prize was so great that the temptation proved irresistible. Shuja-ud-Dowlah resolved that the caravan should never reach Bujnoord. He took his measures rapidly and secretly. He confided his intentions to no one, and hastily collecting such of his troops as were within reach, intercepted the

caravan *en route* to Bujnoord, and returned in triumph with the whole of the booty to Koochan. The prize was indeed valuable, and the blow to the Akhals was the greater inasmuch as the prisoners at Bujnoord remained unredeemed. Such was the consequence of a Turcoman reposing confidence in the honour of a Persian.

Noor Verdi swore to be avenged upon the governor for his treachery, and he assembled his fighting men for the purpose of either recovering something of the loss or of securing an equivalent. The Akhals, not less eager than their chief, gathered round him to the number of six thousand men. Every preparation was made for an immediate advance against Koochan, and a large number of the women, children, and old men of the clan were hid away in a glen for safety, while the young men went out to fight in order to avenge the insult and the wrong that had been done to the Akha people. But there was a traitor in their ranks, a spy in the pay of Shuja-ud-Dowlah. He carried this information to his employer, and while the Akhals were advancing with an easy mind

into Persian territory, their crafty antagonist had outflanked them, and carried off their women, children, and old men at a swoop from their place of safety. This second blow was more than they could bear. The Akhals retired, leaving the Governor of Koochan a second time triumphant. As is usual with more civilised peoples, they vented their rage and disappointment on their leader. They made Noor Verdi the scapegoat for their misfortunes.

Noor Verdi's influence vanished, and the blame for these disasters being laid at his door, he was obliged to leave Akhal and flee to Merv. For upwards of three years he remained on the banks of the Murghab, and then he ventured to pay only a visit to Akhal, where he found that his bad fortune had been almost forgotten, and that they were willing to recognise him again as their chief. But the danger on the side of Russia was becoming imminent, and he had resolved on playing a greater part than he possibly could do as chief of Akhal alone. His son Berdy Mourad Khan* succeeded to some of his autho-

This chief is said to have been killed at Geok Tepeh.

rity, although the northern Akhals entirely cast it off. In fact the Akhals split up into a number of petty chieftainships, and if there was any central authority generally recognised during these years, it was not that of the chief of Akhal, but of Mahomed Shah the saint of Karyz.

During the absence of Noor Verdi in exile among the people of Merv, the Akhals, enfeebled by their struggle with the Governor of Koochan, were called upon to encounter a more serious peril from the direction of Kizil Arvat and the Atrek in the shape of a Russian invasion. At discord with themselves, with faith shattered in the only man competent to lead them, dispirited by their misfortunes in their relations with the Persians, the Akhals saw little prospect of being able to carry on a defensive war with General Lomakine. They decided to avert that war by a voluntary surrender. In August 1875 a deputation of their chiefs waited upon General Lomakine, and tendered their submission in the following speech, "We are surrounded on all sides by the Mervites, Khivans, Afghans, and Persians. They all have sought to make us subject to their autho-

rity. Our independence could not by any possibility continue. Without awaiting, therefore, our enslavement by the force of arms, we have resolved to submit of our own accord to the most powerful of our neighbours, who will know how to guarantee our security. From this day henceforth we are the servants of the White Czar, and we are ready to fulfil all his desires. We are thoroughly acquainted with warfare. Say but the word, and we will place five thousand horsemen at your service. In return we pray you to submit to the White Czar the humble prayer of our people that he should graciously confirm to us the enjoyment of the liberties and immunities granted by the decrees of Timour and Nadir Shah." *

In the meanwhile Noor Verdi had not been wholly idle at Merv. The death of Kousheed, the Khan of Merv, in 1877, appeared to offer him an opportunity for advancing his position in that place. He took a prominent part in the selection of that chief's successor, and, indeed,

* Correspondence respecting Central Asia, No. 1. (1878), page 52.

he seems to have himself aspired to the post. However that may have been, he was not chosen, and, with great tact, managed to figure as the supporter of the successful candidate, while he let it be generally known that if elected he would not refuse the dignity. As it happened, Kousheed was succeeded by his son Baba Khan, who is the present chief of Merv.*

The election of a new chief was followed by a council of war upon the policy to be pursued with regard to the Russian invasion of the Akhal country. At that council peaceful views did not prevail. No inclination was manifested to implore the favourable consideration of the White Czar. In August 1878 Noor Verdi, Baba Khan, and other chiefs bound themselves by a solemn oath to fight. With the Koran

* Another of Kousheed's sons had visited Afghanistan. This visit gave rise to rumours that an alliance had been formed between the chief of Merv and Shere Ali for the purpose of wresting portions of Khorasan and Seistan from Persia. This son, on his return journey from Herat in 1877, was attacked and captured by the Sarik clan of Turcomans, which holds the country round Penjded. There is repeated reference to this son in the correspondence presented to Parliament in the years 1878–79.

before them, and the sword between the leaves, than in which way no oath holds good in Turcoman land, they swore that they would not yield their villages, their honour, and their lives to the mercy of the Muscovites. The Akhals of Beurma and Kizil Arvat might, by a well-timed show of surrender, endeavour to propitiate the Czar and his representatives; but neither the true Akhals nor the Tekes would imitate their kinsmen's weakness. Accordingly during the winter of 1878 the Turcomans worked diligently, and made their preparations with good cheer—Noor Verdi now back among his own people, and foremost in the patriotic work. At Geok Tepeh, Ashkabad, and along the line of the Tejend the strongest positions were made stronger by art, and when Lomakine, hastening impetuously forward, fearful lest Tergoukasoff should win the laurels he had always coveted for himself, reached the first of those places he found the Turcomans in position and prepared to fight.

The Russian regiments rushed madly upon the earthworks, only to be hurled back. In the hand-to-hand fighting on what in a regular fortress would have been the glacis, they were

crushed by numbers. In a short day's battle they lost more men than in any encounter they have yet fought in Central Asia—more than they did at the capture of Tashkent or Samarcand, more than at Irjar, or Makhram, more than in the whole of the campaign against Khiva. Noor Verdi does not appear to have been present at this battle; but he arrived immediately afterwards with a cavalry force from Ashkabad. The main credit of the success belongs to him. It was he who planned it, although it is quite possible that he was himself indebted for his inspiration to an unusual source, and it was he who, above everyone else, breathed fresh spirit into the sinking hearts of his followers.

But what he has already accomplished is as nothing compared to what he will be called upon to do, if the Russians are to be kept permanently out of Turcoman land. He has preserved the Akhal villages from the soldiers of the Caucasus for at least this winter, but they are sure to return in greater numbers, and with a more prudent general. Noor Verdi will, therefore, have not only to strengthen his earthworks at Geok Tepeh and Ashkabad, but also to procure better

arms for his followers. The nondescript weapons which sufficed at Geok Tepeh will not avail hereafter. Nor can he close his eyes to the ever-present danger to Merv from the side of Charjui. Noor Verdi knows that the capture of Merv by the Russians would strike terror to the heart of every Turcoman, and that the Akhals would then, probably, come to the conclusion that further resistance would be futile. Against that danger, which Kaufmann's return to Tashkent would lead us to regard as the more imminent, Noor Verdi must provide quite as much as against the return of a larger army from Krasnovodsk and Chikishlar. The prudence and valour which he has hitherto displayed warrant the assumption that his future plans will be marked by the exhibition of the same qualities. Although not the ruling chief of Merv, Noor Verdi is accepted by the Teke Turcomans generally as their leader, and on his personal character depends more than upon any other single circumstance the future fate of his race. It may be the destiny of the Turcomans to share the same doom as the Kirghiz, but if they steadfastly obey the commands of

Noor Verdi they may possibly maintain their independence for many generations. After their valiant conduct at Geok Tepeh they may certainly be expected to fight like brave men, and thus give a fresh exemplification of the truth of Gibbon's saying that "it would be superfluous to praise the valour of a Turk."*

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* It may be interesting to state that Berdy Mourad Khan told Colonel C. M. Macgregor in 1875 that the Turcomans of Merv were resolved to resist the Russians, when they came, to the bitter death. His boast that "the Tekes were not afraid of the Russians, and, Inshalla! would show them *what a good sword could do*," reads less "vain-glorious" now by the light of the fight at Geok Tepeh than it appeared to be when uttered to Colonel Macgregor.

SHUJA-UD-DOWLAH.

THE Ameer Hoosein Khan, or, as he is better known, the Shuja-ud-Dowlah, that is the Bravest of the State, hereditary chief and governor of the frontier city and district of Koochan, is one of the most important personages in Persia. His relation to the Shah is very similar to that of some of the greater barons to their Sovereign in the Middle Ages. He is practically independent, and the only proof of his being a Persian governor and not an independent prince is furnished by the sums of money and presents he sends to Teheran. On the northern frontier of Khorasan his word is virtually law, and most of the smaller governors would follow his example in any course he might adopt.

Shuja-ud-Dowlah became Governor of Koochan on the death of his elder brother some eighteen or twenty years ago, the office having been hereditary in his family for several generations. He married one of his brother's widows, a Turcoman lady, very rich and a relative of Noor Verdi. She became the *confidante* of all his plans and the favourite among his four wives. She is still living. At the present time Shuja-ud-Dowlah is about fifty years of age. He is a pure Persian by race, and in personal appearance resembles a Jew or rather an Afghan. He is a short—about five feet five inches—slender man, very dark in complexion, with a prominent nose. He is passionately attached to sport, and justly considers himself a first-rate shot. His days are spent away in the mountains in pursuit of game, and he leads as active a life as most Europeans. His scholarly attainments are fair, comprising a little French and English, and he speaks Turkish perfectly. He is moreover a great reader, taking especial pleasure in Professor Owen's works which have been translated into Persian. Politics are, of course, a favourite study with him, and he has very de-

cided views upon the subject of the Russian advance into Kara Kum, which will be touched upon further on. It may not be rash to say that he is fully resolved to turn the coming complications to his own profit. He is very much addicted to European customs, priding himself on his taste in dress, and wearing trousers and a military frock coat. He has also been infected by other of our customs, and among them, by a partiality for wine, of which he considers himself a connoisseur. His district is famed in Khorasan for its vineyards, and the Governor has a special white wine made for his own private use. Added to all the qualities that have been either expressed or suggested it must be stated that he is a good soldier, and possessed with a more than ordinary allowance of courage and nerve. As a companion he can be most amusing, and his *bonhomie* is infectious. From all this he would appear to be a very agreeable and enlightened man. There is a darker side to the picture, as might be inferred from the act of treachery described in the sketch of Noor Verdi Khan.

For several years after the death of his

brother the Governor carried on the work of administration without any event of importance taking place; but about ten years ago the Shah summoned him to Teheran. Without any suspicion on his mind he obeyed the summons and went to the capital, where he was at once cast into prison. The Shah had resolved on placing his eldest son in charge of the frontier of Khorasan, and it was held to be necessary to get the Governor of Koochan into his power, as it was shrewdly suspected that he would not willingly surrender his rights as a semi-independent chieftain. Shuja-ud-Dowlah lingered in prison: the Prince Royal went to Meshed. After he had remained in close confinement for one month, the commander-in-chief, who was a personal friend of his, came to him one night, and told him that his death had been decided upon. His head was to be placed in a sack, and he was to be smothered between two pillows. Shuja-ud-Dowlah, seeing no avenue of escape, exclaimed "Kismet!" and prepared to meet the inevitable.

The commander-in-chief left him, secretly resolved, however, that he would spare no effort to

save his friend, and so well did he plead his cause before the Shah, that not only was the Governor released from prison, but he also received permission to return to Koochan. Shuja-ud-Dowlah was not slow to avail himself of the permission granted to him, and forthwith set out for his place of residence. When he reached Koochan he was astonished to find the gates closed against him. His eldest son, Abdul Hassan Khan, had taken advantage of his father's misfortunes to set himself up as an independent ruler; and when the father returned, the son refused to recognise his superior rights. In this it is very possible that he received indirect encouragement from the Prince Governor of Khorasan.

The youthful aspirant reckoned, however, without his host. Shuja-ud-Dowlah was not yet in the mood for resigning power and independence. He summoned round him his old followers, he proclaimed his return throughout the districts of Koochan and Bujnoord, and he soon found himself at the head of a sufficiently numerous force to enable him to take the field against his rebellious son. He attacked Koochan,

and expelled Abdul Hassan from the district. Thus did Shuja re-establish his authority in Koochan after it had seemed that he would never see the outside of a Persian prison. The vanquished pretender fled to Teheran, where he received a different reception to his father. Instead of being thrown into prison he was honourably entertained there, and the Shah promised to take steps for his advancement. In a short time it became evident that Shuja would be inattentive to the mandates of the Persian Viceroy, and the thought occurred to the Shah that Abdul would be a useful person to employ as a spy upon his actions. He accordingly gave him a letter to his father requiring him to appoint him his secretary in the administration of Koochan.

Unable to refuse, yet unwilling to comply with this direct request upon the part of the Shah, Shuja feigned obedience, but secretly formed the intention of murdering his son at the first favourable opportunity. Abdul heard of this, and fled, on this occasion to the Turcomans.

An episode occurred about this time which

will throw considerable light upon the condition of this frontier. Noor Verdi Khan had a very beautiful daughter, the fame of whose beauty penetrated even to the Governor's residence at Koochan, and Shuja-ud-Dowlah resolved to obtain possession of her. With that view he made overtures to an adventurer—a kind of Bertram Risingham—and promised him a considerable reward if he would carry off the maiden from the village of the Akhal chief. The offer was accepted, and the ruffian proceeded to Akhal, where he remained for several days waiting a favourable opportunity for executing his purpose. At last the opportunity offered itself, and one evening when the maiden left her hut he rushed upon her and stunned her with a blow. Mounting a horse which he had ready saddled, he rode off and made good his escape from the pursuing Turcomans. The danger on this occasion lay before, and not behind.

On his way to Koochan with his prize he met Shuja's son, who, spying the maiden, asked him whither he was taking her. The man replied, "To Koochan." "Oh, I will

save you the trouble." "That cannot be, because I am taking her to your father." "Never mind my father; I must have her. Here are three hundred tomans if you will surrender her without resistance. If you refuse, I must take her by force." The man, seeing opposition would be futile, consented, and pocketed the money. Thus did the Governor of Koochan's son win the daughter of the Akhal chief; fortunately for him, as the event turned out, he married her.

Once among the Turcomans Shuja's son raised the standard of revolt. He did not find it difficult to assemble a band of followers, when his declared object was the capture of Koochan. In this enterprise he fared well, carrying all before him in the field, and compelling Shuja to retire into the city. On one occasion the latter was even driven to seek safety in a mosque. Reduced to these straits, the Governor had recourse to negotiation, in which he was more successful than he had been in arms. By promising to use his influence to obtain for his son some high post in the Persian service, he induced Abdul to

disband the Turcoman army. The son was made commander of the troops at Meshed, but did not hold this post long, for, having failed in some fresh intrigues, he fled to the Turcomans a second time. His previous conduct, especially the abduction of Noor Verdi's daughter, had made him an object of hate rather than of love to the Turcomans. It was, therefore, doubtful what would be his reception among them. Abdul Hassan, equal to the occasion, rode into the Akhal encampment at night, and went straight to Noor Verdi's own tent. Once inside, the laws of hospitality secured him from molestation. The next day the assembled Akhals clamoured for the blood of the man who had carried off the daughter of their chief. Noor Verdi, leading forth his guest, asked him what he had done with his daughter. Abdul replied that he had married her. Upon this he was forgiven and treated as an honoured guest. That marriage saved him. In January 1878 his name was mentioned among the proposed delegates from the Persian Government to be sent to Merv.

With the exception of these disputes with his son, Shuja-ud-Dowlah has never been disturbed in his authority, and is, practically speaking, omnipotent in its exercise, save in cases of life and death. Short of these, he can do pretty much as he pleases. His punishments are as a rule very severe, and take the form, in most cases, of mutilation. It is said there are not a hundred men in Koochan who have not had their noses cut off, and many have also lost their fingers, ears, &c. The bastinado is also used freely, and is sometimes found to be as fatal as the noose or the axe.

It has been mentioned that the neighbouring governors, Allahyar Khan of Dereges, and Yar Mahomed of Bujnoord, are subordinate to the Governor of Koochan. They have their own individual troubles and difficulties to deal with, but these do not prevent them from combining in the annual raid that is carried into Turcoman territory every spring. These *chapours* or raids are the event of the year. General preparations are made for them as soon as the snow melts on the mountains, and these are usually completed by the month of May. It is

difficult to give the amount of spoil which is as a rule obtained in these annual expeditions, but an average computation would place it at thirty thousand pounds. This is the impost raised upon the Turcomans by force of arms for the purpose of satisfying the demands of the Shah. They of course lead to counter-raids on the part of the Turcomans, and these are the more frequent and the more daring in proportion as the number of the prisoners taken by the Persians is smaller.

Various schemes have been tried for the purpose of putting a stop to these expeditions, but as yet they have proved in vain. The Persian governors have limited their *chapours* only by regard to their power and resources. Some years ago the Shah sent a general to investigate the matter on the spot, and he decided that no more raids should be made, and that a fine should be paid to the Shah. The fine was paid, but the raids continued—the fine being paid out of the proceeds of raids organized for the purpose. These facts are an expressive commentary upon the fitful efforts that are made by the Persian Government to carry out reform.

A governor possessing any ordinary amount of tact can always stave off a searching inquiry into his acts by paying an extra sum into the royal exchequer.

In conclusion, something must be said of the actual power of Shuja-ud-Dowlah. He is the possessor of a large extent of rich territory, and with it he acquires control over the largest number of camels and horses in Khorasan. He has an armed force of twenty thousand men, a nucleus of whom has been well armed and carefully drilled. His city of Koochan—naturally strong and surrounded with walls—supplies him with a centre for his power, and a basis whence he can act with effect. He also holds in it the true key to the whole of the northern trade of Khorasan. In a popular cause his strength would be augmented by that of Bujnoord, perhaps of Dereges as well. It is, a legitimate subject for inquiry what would be a popular cause.

Persian though he be, Shuja-ud-Dowlah is bitterly anti-Persian in inclination. He believes that his country is decaying, and that the days of the Shahdom are numbered; nor has he any

faith in the regeneration of Persia as an autonomous state. He may be wrong, or he may be right; but such is his belief. He also dislikes his countrymen, and owes the Shah a grudge for his treatment at Teheran years ago. These views have obtained a strong hold upon the somewhat morbid nature of this enlightened but despotic Persian governor. He has expanded them by a close consideration of the advance of Russia from the Caspian and of England from the Suleiman; his conviction being that Khorasan must become the dependency of the one empire or the other. He is willing, if not anxious, to assist towards effecting either consummation. He is swayed by no predilections in the matter, but is simply intent on supporting the winning side. It is very possible that in this his imagination has got the better of his reason, but we cannot be indifferent to the sentiments of the most powerful man in Khorasan. His aid might prove invaluable to the Russians on the occasion of their next advance from the Atrek. His active support would, on the other hand, be the best weapon in the armoury of the Turcomans.

YAKOOB KHAN.

MAHOMED YAKOOB KHAN, late Ameer of Cabul, is a name with which the English reader is by this time tolerably familiar. Whether for good or for evil, he will be inseparably connected in history with some of the most memorable events in Anglo-Afghan relations; and now that his career in his own country has finally closed, and that he has been compelled to swell the list of those unsuccessful chiefs who live upon the bounty of the Indian Government, it may be expected that surmise will be rife upon the question of what might have been, and that some little attention will be paid to the story of a life rich, even among the numerous ad-

venturers which the soil of Central Asia has produced so abundantly, in varied incident and stirring episode.

Mahomed Yakoob is the third son of the late Ameer Shere Ali. Of his brothers, Mahomed Ali, the eldest, was killed at the battle of Kujhbaz in 1865, and Ibrahim, the second, is still alive. Yakoob was born in the year 1849, his mother being the daughter of the Momund chief of Lalpura, a village situated on the northern bank of the Cabul river near Dacca. Of his early life at the Court of Dost Mahomed we know nothing. He first appeared upon the scene after the fall of Herat, whither he had accompanied Shere Ali in the train of that prince's father. The capture of that fortress was followed by the death of the aged Ameer, and the latter event led to the proclamation of Shere Ali as his successor. It soon became evident that Shere Ali's claims would be disputed, and apprehensive lest his power should slip through his fingers in the centre of the state while absent at Herat, he hurried back with the victorious army to Candahar.

It is not clear for what reason Shere Ali

nominated his third son in preference to his elder brothers to the responsible charge of governing Herat. They may have been in some other part of the kingdom, or Yakoob may have had some special attraction at that time, which he afterwards lost, in the eyes of his father. But whatever the reason, Shere Ali marched eastward, leaving Yakoob behind him as his representative in the West. While the fortune of war was veering from one side to the other round Cabul, Candahar, and Ghizni, the boy Yakoob was governing Herat, Badghees, and Ferrah in all tranquillity. The western portion of Afghanistan enjoyed under him a quietude and immunity from disturbance that made it the one spot of peace and promise midst the troubled waters of Afghan affairs.

Yakoob had not long been installed at Herat when the wandering dervish, who explored the countries of Central Asia in search of adventure and for the edification of Englishmen, known now to the world by his writings as Professor Arminius Vámbéry of Pesth, reached that city. He, like every other traveller, was received in durbar by the ruler, whom he

found engaged in the congenial task of reviewing his troops. Something in the manner or the face of the wayworn dervish attracted his attention and excited his suspicion. Desirous of taking him off his guard, Yakoob turned suddenly upon him with the exclamation, "You are an Englishman!" The *sang froid* of the European proved equal to the occasion. He repeated an appropriate text from the Koran, and the boy-ruler, if not convinced, was at least too abashed to renew his inquiries. This is the first glimpse we get of the man who is now a pensioner of the Indian Government. In many respects it is the most vivid we possess of him.

From the time of Vámbéry's visit to the year 1868 is a long stretch of time to pass over without stopping. We are compelled to do so for want of materials. In many ways those four years were important ones, both for Afghanistan and for Yakoob. The cause of Shere Ali, which at one moment promised to be triumphant, had been finally cast down. In the sight of most men it had been irretrievably ruined. The principal cities, all the eastern country, were in the hands of his brethren. North, as well as

south of the great mountain range, his authority had been repudiated. The chief supporters of his cause had either been slain in battle or had abandoned him. His soldiers had been dispersed to all quarters by frequent disaster, his artillery captured, his treasure expended. He had nothing left save his confidence in Allah and fate.

There remained to him, indeed, the province of Herat, over which his son continued to exercise sway as his lieutenant. During those years of warfare Yakoob had been drilling the Heratees, and gathering in the resources of the districts entrusted to his care. All power was centred in his hands, and although not of very formidable proportions, it was, at least, unquestioned so far as it went. It requires no stretch of imagination to suppose that when Shere Ali, sick at heart and with small hope of better fortune left, retired to Herat, he was in the right mood to listen to and approve the daring and sanguine schemes suggested to him by his son, who, as yet knowing nothing of defeat or disappointment, was full only of the ignorant audacity of youth. Yakoob showed

Shere Ali his trained regiments, he pointed to his well-supplied arsenal, he dwelt upon the enthusiasm of his followers. He may also have observed that their opponents were inflated with a belief in their invincibility, that they were certainly at feud with each other, and that much of their armed strength lay north of the Hindoo Koosh. Whether these arguments were used, or whether the son put the father aside and acted upon his own behoof, the fact is clear that it was Yakoob Khan who began the campaign of 1868 on his own resources, and with supreme control. Shere Ali had failed. It remained for his son to inaugurate a more successful era.

While, therefore, Azim and his son Surwar were acting the parts of despotic rulers at Cabul and Candahar, and while Abderrahman resided in a very dissatisfied mood at Balkh, Yakoob, marching from Herat and Ferrah, advanced in the direction of Girishk and the Helmund. At this moment Yakoob may be said to have been at his prime. He was only nineteen years of age, but the Afghans, especially those of the ruling family, are then at

their best. Dost Mahomed was, perhaps, the sole exception of an Afghan retaining possession of all his faculties until past the middle of life. Yakoob had been accustomed to exercise command from his boyhood, and his home had been the camp, his society that of soldiers. He was also deeply impressed with a sense of his father's wrongs. He aspired to be his saviour. The prize of victory would also be for him a double one. Not only would it obtain for him a great military reputation, but it made it morally certain that he would become his father's heir. The claims of a man who had saved his cause, who had restored a lasting tranquillity to the whole of the country, could not be passed over. So, doubtless, thought the young prince as he marched on Candahar.

Surwar, Azim's son, left Candahar with the garrison and such of the tribes as he could gather round him for the purpose of contesting the fords of the Helmund. His antagonist had been too quick for him. Girishk, the family castle of the House of Poyndah, was in Yakoob's hands when Surwar reached the banks of the Helmund; and with it he had virtually won

possession of the passage of the river. Still, to do him justice, Surwar showed himself not unworthy of the reputation of his father. He held his position on the eastern side of the river, and did his best to check the advance of the Heratees. His efforts were in vain. Neither the headlong impetuosity of the levies of Herat nor the tactical ability evinced by their leader was to be refused. The battle of the Helmund was Yakoob's maiden victory, and the high promise which it held forth was more than justified on many a later field.

The victory at Girishk entailed the surrender of Candahar. Surwar fled northwards, and the government of Azim collapsed in the southern portion of the kingdom. The snow was on the ground, the timid merchant had not yet thought of sending his goods through the passes, the peasant had not begun to sow the seeds for the harvest in the uplands of Afghanistan; but it was no part of Yakoob's plan to remain in idle dalliance at Candahar. With the eye of a true soldier he had hit upon the fatal blot in the generalship of Shere Ali and

his opponents. It was delay, the tardiness of following up a success, which had lost Shere Ali the fruits of victory. His son would, above all things, avoid the repetition of the blunder. His blows should not only be hard, but they should be quick. In that sense he may be said to have introduced a new and striking feature into Afghan warfare.

Almost before Azim had received intelligence of the fall of Candahar, Yakoob was in full march for Khelat-i-Ghiljie. That fortress, the natural strength of which is so great that it may, without exaggeration, be styled the strongest place in Afghanistan, surrendered without a blow. The rulers of Afghanistan have always neglected it, partly because of the apathy which has characterised all their measures for the improvement of the national defences, and partly because they have been desirous not to arouse the hostility of the Ghiljies. In Yakoob's hands it became the advanced base for a decisive movement against Ghizni and Cabul. Shere Ali at this juncture arrived with reinforcements. By this time the snow was beginning to disappear in the valleys, and

there was reasonable promise that warlike operations could be carried on in the northern quarters of the state. The advance to Khelat developed into a march on Ghizni. The town and fortress of Ghizni opened its gates. The commandant, with a small body of desperate men, withdrew into the citadel, but that fact presented no significance. Yakoob felt that he could ignore the small force holding the citadel, as he was in possession of the greater portion of the fortress. He marched northwards on Cabul, which at once surrendered. Azim fled to Balkh, there to join Abderrahman, who by this time had collected an army, and was on the point of marching southward for the purpose of coming to conclusions with his cousin. Abderrahman had few doubts that the conqueror of Shere Ali would have less success against the son. Already in his mind he was, for a second time, the arbiter of the fate of Afghanistan, and he expected that the guerdon of his toil on this occasion would be that he, as Afzul's son, would receive the Ameership. In all this he was reckoning upon too sanguine premises.

Rapidity of motion had made Yakoob's campaign a promenade of triumph after triumph from the banks of the Helmund to the gates of the Bala Hissar. He did not fail to employ the same means now at the crucial point of the war, and the like fortune attended his measures. While Abderrahman was engaged in the difficult task of leading his miscellaneous forces—part Usbeg and part Afghan—through the defiles of Sighan, Yakoob, with a smaller army, had taken up a strong position in front of Bamian, and was in readiness to do battle for the defence of the road to Cabul. We know not with which side the action began, but the result was a complete victory for Yakoob. The Khan of Maimenè, with whom Yakoob had entered into relations while ruling at Herat, at this moment made a hostile demonstration in the rear of Abderrahman, and compelled him and his uncle to retire into Kohistan instead of upon Balkh. There he gathered round him the nucleus of his army, and strove to seize Cabul by a *coup de main*. Yakoob was again too quick for him. When Abderrahman reached the vicinity of the city he found Yakoob and

his army drawn up in readiness to receive him. Foiled in his attempt, he withdrew in the direction of Ghizni, followed by Yakoob. He managed to effect the relief of the garrison of the citadel of that place, but the effort cost him dear, for Yakoob attacked him and inflicted considerable loss upon his rear-guard. Shortly afterwards, being compelled to give battle at Tinah Khan, Yakoob's star again shone in the ascendant, and Abderrahman and Azim were obliged to flee to Persia. The campaign, which had been boldly conceived, had been boldly carried out; and the closing days of the year 1868 saw the complete success of the plan which had been formed at its commencement. The civil war that had devastated Afghanistan during five years had finally terminated, and its close brought credit to Yakoob Khan above every one else.

The war had scarcely concluded when Shere Ali set out from Cabul to visit Lord Mayo. On that journey Yakoob did not accompany him. The conqueror of the country remained behind to be its pacifier. While at Umballa the Ameer expressed the most friendly sentiments towards

his son. Yakoob was depicted to the English officials as a warrior and a hunter—a man of action. But already in his heart the Ameer felt desirous of making his youngest son, Abdullah Jan, his heir. He was secretly afraid of Yakoob, and had very little faith in his show of obedience; and therefore, although Yakoob was generally accepted as his successor, no formal proclamation was made of his being the heir apparent. For a time Yakoob was Governor of Cabul, and then he held the same post at Candahar. But it soon became evident to him that Shere Ali had either forgotten or wilfully ignored the greatness of the obligation he owed him. The desire to humour a favourite wife overcame the father's sense of gratitude, and Yakoob, seeing that his presence at Candahar would not prevent the nomination of Abdullah Jan at the first favourable opportunity, retired to Ferrah.

At that place Yakoob collected a small army, and with it in 1871 he made himself master of Herat. For three years he governed Herat, Ghorian, and their dependencies for himself. Shere Ali had the prudence to leave him to his

own devices. This was the period when Captain Marsh visited Herat, and was very hospitably entertained by Yakoob.* He found the Heratees exceedingly well disposed towards England, and their ruler shared their sentiments. Yakoob was actively engaged in the task of creating an army. He had regular regiments, both of infantry and of cavalry. He had also constructed six smooth-bore six-pounder guns, and stored up a large number of miscellaneous weapons. Captain Marsh computed that, in all, Yakoob could bring ten thousand men into the field. He pronounced the young ruler to be a very rising man and one of whom we should some day hear a great deal more. Yakoob Khan appears to have governed Herat with the same

* Captain Marsh gives the following description of Yakoob Khan at this time in his book ("A Ride through Islam," 1877). "He was dressed in a European military braided blue coat, with black trousers, socks, the Heratee sheepskin *kulla* or hat, and a fine cloth *choga*; and his gold-belted sword lay in front at his feet. He is twenty-six years old, well bred, has a pleasant intelligent face, not very fair, middle height (five feet three inches (?)), small hands and feet, slight moustache, with a slightly retreating forehead, good voice."

ability and success on this second occasion that he had done upon the first. Although often reduced to straits for want of money, he does not seem to have resorted to acts of tyranny for the purpose of replenishing his coffers.

But the inadequacy of his resources for the task of administering the affairs of a large province compelled him at length to make overtures to his father. He asked that a sum of money might be given him so that he should govern Herat as lieutenant for Shere Ali; and the result of the communications that took place with that object in view was that Yakoob left Herat and went to Cabul, trusting to his father's promise to permit his return in safety. This was in October 1874. On the 30th of the month Yakoob reached Cabul, where he received a friendly greeting from his father. Trays of sweetmeats were sent to the different stages where he halted, by the Ameer, Abdullah Jan, Ibrahim Khan, and others. He was accompanied by two or three chosen companions, among them his father-in-law, Yahya Khan, and one hundred cavalry. Yakoob met, as we have said, with a friendly reception from

Shere Ali, whom, "according to the custom of the country, he waited upon, and kissed His Highness's feet." * He brought with him numerous presents, including "thirty-six horses of superior breed and some choice cloth manufactures of Herat, such as 'kurk,' 'kakuma,' carpets, woollen 'daris,' &c." All these were accepted, and in return the Ameer sent him cooked food from the royal kitchen and assigned him a cash *ziafat*, or allowance.

Yakoob stipulated that he should not be detained more than ten days, that he should be excused waiting on or seeing the heir apparent, and that he should be allowed to take his adherents back with him. All these points were agreed to by the Ameer's representatives, who were two Ghiljie chiefs. On the very day when, in accordance with this arrangement, Yakoob should have been permitted to leave Cabul, he was by the Ameer's orders placed in custody. The 8th of November found the young sirdar not a traveller on his journey back to Herat,

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* Afghan Correspondence, 1878, page 125.

but the occupant of a state prison. The Viceroy of India—Lord Northbrook—made representations to Shere Ali upon the subject of his breach of faith, but he took our intervention in an ill sense and cherished up against us a grievance upon that score. In his letter to Lord Northbrook he wrote, "Mention before a father of the evil actions of his son undoubtedly tends to increase the father's shame. Sincere, intelligent friends, owing to their sound judgment and far-sightedness, do not like, under any circumstances, to put their faithful friends to such shame."

So it came to pass that Yakoob Khan, the man who had reconquered a lost kingdom for his sire, and given a settled government to a large province for several years, received as his reward a place of confinement instead of honours. His services had been great, and his ability admitted; but, whatever the provocation, he had been a rebel. He had acquired possession of Herat by main force. It was impossible that the Ameer or his advisers should show themselves indifferent to what had happened. Shere Ali, anxious to have as his successor the

child Abdullah Jan, knew that his dynastic schemes would have small chance of succeeding if Yakoob were to consolidate his authority as Governor of Herat. His own death would be the signal, he could not fail to perceive, for a civil war in which his favourite son would be inevitably defeated. When Yakoob entered the Bala Hissar his fate was sealed. Not the sacred oath sworn upon the Koran at Herat by the Ameer's envoys, not the venerated privileges of a guest, could save the man who had been marked as dangerous by the king. Neither the rites of religion nor the unpolluted example of eastern custom avail in Afghan eyes to protect either the stranger within their gates, or the too prominent or too ambitious vassal whose slaughter the ruler has decided upon.

From November 1874 until December 1878 the figure of Yakoob Khan disappeared from Afghan politics. It was even uncertain whether he had not been summarily disposed of. His friends—and he had many—endeavoured to obtain his release. His father-in-law and several Ghiljie chiefs offered to go bail for

him, but all their efforts were in vain. Yakoob remained a prisoner, and it was not until the death of Abdullah Jan in August 1878 that his friends began to have any solid hopes of obtaining his pardon. But even then Shere Ali showed no great eagerness to release him. Yakoob's name was not mentioned, indeed, until after the war had commenced, and when brought out of confinement, the outer line of the Afghan defences had been pierced by the English army, and Shere Ali was on the point of leaving his capital for Afghan Turkestan. The suddenness of this resolution is best shown by the Ameer's own words upon the subject. Writing on the 19th of November to the Viceroy, he speaks of him as his "undutiful son, the ill-starred wretch, Yakoob Khan." In his firman, dated 22nd of December 1878, appointing Yakoob his representative, he styles him "our elder and beloved son.

It was in December 1878. therefore. that.

Afghan Correspondence, No. 7. (1879), pages 5 and 8.

after more than four years imprisonment, Yakoob returned to public life. The withdrawal of Shere Ali to Balkh left him in possession of most of the attributes of power, but nevertheless he made it clear that he was only acting in the place of his father. This is shown in his letter of the 20th of February 1879, to Major Cavagnari, in which he said that he would "bring every human effort to bear on my exalted father in the hope that, perhaps, the friendship of this God-granted State with the illustrious British Government may remain constant and firm." Within a week of writing that letter—on the 26th of February—the news of the death of Shere Ali reached Cabul, and Yakoob at once sent our representative the information "out of friendship."

There is no doubt whatever that, in leaving Yakoob to act for him, it was the intention of Shere Ali that he should be his peace-maker with the English Government. The measures which Yakoob adopted show this with sufficient clearness. From the very commencement his actions were conciliatory. With the object of establishing relations of friendship and

settling the quarrel between the States, he carried on a correspondence with Major Cavagnari from February until May. In all he wrote seven letters upon the subject, and in each it is possible to detect only the expression of a cordial amity, and an earnest desire to stand well with the Indian Government.

On the 6th of March the terms upon which peace would be concluded were sent to him by order of the Viceroy, and in his reply, dated the 12th of the same month, Yakoob acquiesced in them all, save the one relating to the cession of the nominal control exercised by the Ameer over the passes, and of the districts of Sibi, Pisheen, and Khurum. To that he made an emphatic refusal. It was "beyond the strength and capacity of the officers of his God-granted Government." From that date until the end of April, frequent negotiations took place between the two Governments, and at last, after it had been arranged that Major Cavagnari should proceed to Cabul, Yakoob suddenly came to the determination to visit the English camp. On the 11th of April Lord Lytton had

addressed a letter to him styling him Wali of Cabul and its dependencies, and this may be considered to have been the first formal recognition by the Indian Government of his accession to the Ameership.

On the 3rd of May Yakoob left Cabul, and on the 8th reached the camp of the advanced British force at Gundamuck. He was accompanied by several of his chief supporters, and an escort of between four and five hundred men. He was evidently pleased with the friendly and honourable reception which awaited him, and it is probable that, notwithstanding his apparent coolness, he was induced by the impulses of the moment to exaggerate the advantages he might obtain as an ally of the English Government. Everything was coloured with sanguine expectations at Gundamuck. The Ameer had been summoned originally to power to make peace. The Indian Government was also much disposed to arrange the difficulties that had arisen with Shere Ali. So after less than three weeks' discussion Yakoob's objections to the cession of territory were overcome and a treaty based on the demands formulated three

months before by the Viceroy was drawn up and signed on the 26th of May.*

The following description of the appearance of the Ameer at this time is well worth preserving. It is taken from the "Times" correspondent's letter, dated May 9th:—

"His appearance, I should say, is decidedly aristocratic. He is of middle height, straight, and well built. His complexion is that of an Italian, and infinitely fairer than that of many of the bronzed warriors one sees in the British camps. His features are of the usual coarsely aquiline Afghan type. His expression is somewhat stern and careworn, but indicates character and resolution. His beard is short and crisp, and at his age, thirty-four," (he was only thirty years of age at this time,) "is doubtless of its natural black colour, undisguised by the cosmetics so freely used by Afghans when gray hairs appear. The Ameer rode a well-bitted, light chestnut Turcoman charger, equipped

* The articles of the Treaty of Gundamuck will be found enumerated on page 21 of "Afghan Correspondence (No. 7.), 1879."

with European military saddle and bridle. He was dressed in an Afghan cloak of the finest material of the country, made with evident attention to a becoming fit, and wore European trousers fastened under a neat polished-leather boot by chain straps. His head-dress was a close-fitting cap of Astrakhan wool. He sat his horse erect and well, and it was easy to fancy him the gallant soldier and skilful general which in his earlier years he so often proved himself to be."

Yakoob soon became very popular in the camp. His "dignified and composed demeanour on public occasions," and "his entire freedom from either a cringing or a swaggering air," were much admired. Wonder was often expressed how one who had so recently arrived at kingly state should have acquired so soon "the correct kingly air." As a matter of fact there was nothing to excite wonder in this. Not only is it notorious that Afghans of good birth possess great natural dignity, and that the Barucksyes have always been remarkable for pride of race; but Yakoob had from his earliest youth been accustomed to command. As a boy

and as a man he had governed Herat; and he had led armies in the field when English youths would be still in the school-room. It would have given juster cause for wonder and astonishment if the grandson of Dost Mahomed had shown himself deficient in "the correct kingly air."

The negotiations at Gundamuck closed in the same harmonious manner as they had commenced. Writing on the 30th of May to the Viceroy, Yakoob said that he had hoped to have had "the unbounded pleasure of a joyful interview" with His Excellency at Simla, but that various circumstances, prominent among which was "the anarchy prevailing in his kingdom," compelled him to put off his journey. But the pleasure was still looked forward to, and "towards the close of the next cold season," that is to say in March 1880, he anticipated having the pleasure of carrying out his visit to the Viceroy. In June Yakoob returned to Cabul, and the British army had been withdrawn before the close of the month behind the western entrance of the Khyber. Cavagnari, to whose tact and unflagging energy the success

of the delicate negotiations with the Ameer was mainly due, returned to Peshawur to make arrangements for his early departure for Cabul, where he was to take up his abode as the "permanent British Resident." This was to be the reward for his great services, and it was the one which he coveted more than any other that could have been bestowed upon him.

On the 14th of July Cavagnari, who had just been knighted, reached Khurum fort, and ten days afterwards entered Cabul. The following extract from a description* written by himself of the scene on his entry into the city gives a graphic account of it:—

"About four miles from the city, Sirdar Abdoolah Khan, son of the famous Sultan Jan, of Herat, accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and an escort of cavalry, met the Envoy. Two elephants, with gilt and silver howdahs, had been sent for the use of the Envoy and his Staff. Close to the city the whole of the Cabul garrison, consisting of two cavalry regiments, two batteries of artillery, and nine infantry regiments, were drawn up in close column, and presented arms as the *cortége* passed. The bands played what they imagined was 'God save the Queen,' but if the tune and time were

* See "Times," August 30, 1879.

somewhat faulty, the honour intended for the British guests by giving them their National Anthem was none the less appreciated. As the Envoy's elephant entered the gate of the Bala Hissar, or citadel of Cabul, a salute of seventeen guns was fired by a heavy battery (the siege train of 18-pounders which the British Government in former days gave to the Ameer Shere Ali Khan) posted on some rising ground in front of the city. The house-tops and shop windows of that part of the city through which the procession passed were crowded with sight-seeers, but the conduct of the crowd was orderly and respectful in the extreme. A guard of honour was drawn up a short distance from the gateway of the quarters appointed by the Ameer for the residence of the British Embassy, and as the Envoy alighted from his elephant the Commander-in-Chief and the Finance Minister waited on him and conveyed friendly inquiries from the Ameer. In the afternoon Major Sir Louis Cavagnari and Staff paid a formal visit to the Ameer. The building in which the members of the Embassy are lodged is very commodious, and is considered one of the best dwelling-houses in Cabul. There are two houses, one four-storied, the other two-storied, connected by side walls, so that there is a spacious quadrangle in the centre. The superstructure of these houses is principally of wood, with small kiln-baked bricks built in between frameworks of wood. This is said to be the best style of building to withstand earthquakes, which are very frequent in Cabul. The houses had been thoroughly cleaned and whitewashed, and are by no means uncomfortable. During the whole of the journey the officers and escort of the Embassy were the guests of the Ameer. Large trays of cooked food of various descrip-

tions were sent three times a day to the officers, and rations were served out to the escort and camp-followers. Fruit was supplied in such great profusion that the baggage animals were seen feasting off a large heap which the camp-followers were unable to dispose of."

In a closing sentence he said that this honourable and ostentatious reception would give a *quietus* to those pessimists who questioned the Ameer's power throughout his kingdom. The result showed, unfortunately, that there was solid reason for questioning the stability of the Ameer's power. For nearly six weeks the English Embassy remained undisturbed in the city, and then, after some warnings had been given, there occurred that outbreak on the 3rd of September, on the part of the Ameer's troops, which resulted in the destruction of Sir Louis Cavagnari, his three companions, Mr. Jenkyns, Lieutenant Hamilton, and Dr. Kelly, and their escort — with two or three exceptions — of seventy-six men of the Corps of Guides. That terrible event roused the greatest indignation in the breasts of all Englishmen, and well it might, for never in our history had worthier representatives of the country been done to so shameful and so unprovoked a death.

The policy of Yakoob Khan had for some weeks before that occurrence become more tortuous than the results attained at Gundamuck would have led us to suppose. Before Sir Louis Cavagnari had resided long at Cabul it was made apparent by Yakoob's acts that his mind was in a vacillating state with regard to the value of the English alliance. He was evidently beginning to repent of the complaisant part which he had played. His objections to the cession of territory recovered something of their original force. The reproaches of his brother Ayoob could not but exercise great influence upon a mind which, whether it had become unstrung by long confinement or not, was certainly tuned to the high key of one accustomed to brood over great deeds. Those reproaches came fast and frequently; and they acquired fresh weight because they were reciprocated by the soldiers who, in the month of August, reached Cabul from Herat. In July the English Envoy was the most welcome of guests; in August the Ameer was plainly tired of his presence. Yakoob has always protested, and still protests, that he had a sincere personal

regard for Cavagnari, and there appears in his conduct nothing inconsistent with the declaration. It may be that throughout he was playing a part, and that his good temper in the negotiations with the English authorities arose from a sinister purpose. We have no proof, however, of this; and certainly he could have attained the same end with less difficulty by pursuing a straighter and simpler course.

The probabilities are altogether in favour of the view that up to May Yakoob earnestly desired to come to terms with the English. With the signature of peace a great weight was taken off his mind. He knew that dangers and difficulties surrounded him; but he thought that he could overcome them. He believed that his star would yet prove in the ascendant. On his return to Cabul he found himself brought face to face with the elements in the country inimical to England, and in the silent struggle he fared worse than he anticipated. Before August ended he had become virtually powerless to arrest the career of the nation towards open hostility to England. The question he had then to decide was, whether he

should float with the stream, or endeavour to stem the national impulse by risking his position. The doubt still tormented him, and his mind was vacillating between the two courses, when his soldiery took the matter out of his hands and decided the progress of events by massacring the British Envoy and his companions.

There can be little doubt that if Yakoob had not been in this state of mental uncertainty he might have done much more than he did towards saving the lives of our countrymen. While admitting the extenuating circumstance of the effect upon a sensitive mind at discovering that the peace which terminated a disastrous war was far from being popular with his subjects, it is impossible to refrain from expressing a decided opinion that both as an ally and as a host Yakoob's conduct fell very far short indeed of what was required of him. The excuses he made for his apathy and inaction were, at the time, palpably insufficient. They have since been conclusively shown to have been utterly false. Yakoob Khan did nothing on the 3rd of September, for

the simple and sufficient reason that he was not prepared to run counter to the desires of a large section of his people. Those wishes were being proclaimed in an unmistakable manner, and so far as possible Yakoob desired to place himself in harmony with them. He probably never intended to go the full length of a rupture with England; but the acts of his countrymen precipitated the catastrophe.

It would, perhaps, be unfair to come to an adverse opinion on the subject of Yakoob's conduct in leaving his capital for the camp of General Roberts, and of the incident* which occurred on the eve of the battle of Charasiab. Nor should too much be made of the charge that has been brought against him of having concealed letters from the Russian authorities while showing us "dummies." Such conduct would no doubt be very reprehensible in an European—it has been known, however, in our history—but as this is a case of an Afghan it is

* He was visited by one of the Afghan leaders.

useless to descant upon its iniquity. Yakoob would have played a bolder part if he had cast in his lot with the rebels, but then that would have been taken as evidence of his participation in their previous crimes. It was the predominant element of weakness in his character that he wished to stand well with us, and he was evidently anxious to save his personal reputation after the tragedy of the 3rd of September. For that reason he came to the camp of Sir Frederic Roberts, but he could not forget that he was an Afghan ruler, and, as such, bound to take care of the interests of his people. He found the English advancing with rapid and irresistible strides towards Cabul, and in the eye of each soldier he saw the fixed resolve to exact a very terrible revenge for the murder of the gallant Cavagnari. He strove to avert the danger by counselling a delay; but his arguments were unavailing. The march on Cabul continued.

Then he expressed a desire to leave our camp and to return to his capital. Perhaps he had resolved to place himself at the head of his troops, perhaps to flee with his treasure to

Turkestan. His desire was not complied with, however, and he witnessed from the English camp the flight of his army at Charasiab and the entry into Cabul. He saw also the destruction of the Bala Hissar, and then, sick of a titular rank which had brought him neither the attributes of power nor the pleasure of tranquillity, he abdicated. That act, which was taken by Afghans to mean that he was tired of being an English nominee, served undoubtedly to revive his sinking popularity; and his name would infallibly have become the rallying cry for those who were hostile to this country. It was wisely decided that he should be conveyed to India, and the resolution, suddenly taken, was speedily acted upon. With his arrival at Chunar, the place which the Viceroy has selected for him to reside in, Yakoob's public life may be considered to have reached its close, for the present at all events. It is highly improbable that he will ever return as ruler to Cabul. Such an event would be the stultification of all our recent policy. But Dost Mahomed returned after two years of apparently hopeless exile, and Yakoob Khan will

doubtless beguile his time with the hope that he will have similar good fortune. Taken in its whole, his career is one of the most picturesque we have been called upon to consider, and if his manhood belied the promise of his youth it must be admitted that there have been few princes who had better right to complain of fortune. He is the chief living representative of a remarkable family, and, if his character showed many of the faults and weaknesses of Afghan nature, he at one time possessed in a high degree the military skill and personal fortitude which made the House of Poyndah the foremost among the families of the Durani-Abdalis.

NOTE.

Since the preceding pages were written some further information has been received from India; but, until the Report of the Commission of Inquiry is published, the rumours which are current on the subject of the Ameer's conduct should be received with diffidence. It is said

that Yakoob Khan signed the order for the attack on the Residency, and, if proof of such an act were in our hands, it was the height of weakness on the part of our authorities to refrain from at once inflicting the only punishment adequate to so heinous and inexcusable a crime. The very fact that General Roberts did not include the Ameer among those who suffered for their guilt should be the clearest token that he possessed no proof of Yakoob's criminality. Moreover, it is not to be supposed that the Afghan prince would have come into our camp at Kushi, knowing that he was leaving behind him at Cabul the proof of his having participated in the massacre of the 3rd of September. His departure from his capital—which expressed his repudiation of the crime of his subjects—showed that he was still anxious to preserve his good name among the English; in fact, that his mind was still oscillating between his double duty as an Afghan prince and as a British ally. If he had signed Cavagnari's death-warrant, if, indeed, he had done anything more than make himself an object for pity by his helplessness, and

want of resolution, he would have vanquished the doubts which beset him, and would never have come into the British camp at all. The very peril which, on the supposition of his having approved of the attack on the British Envoy, attached to him personally, above every other, would have impelled him into a consistent course of hostility to the English. He would have cast all his treaty obligations to the winds as useless trammels, and would have figured as a new Akbar Khan. The balance of evidence is, therefore, in favour of the view that, while his irresolution and faint-heartedness were most culpable, his actions stopped short of being criminal.

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LONDON:
PRINTED BY W. H. ALLEN AND CO., 13 WATERLOO PLACE.

00023637

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018